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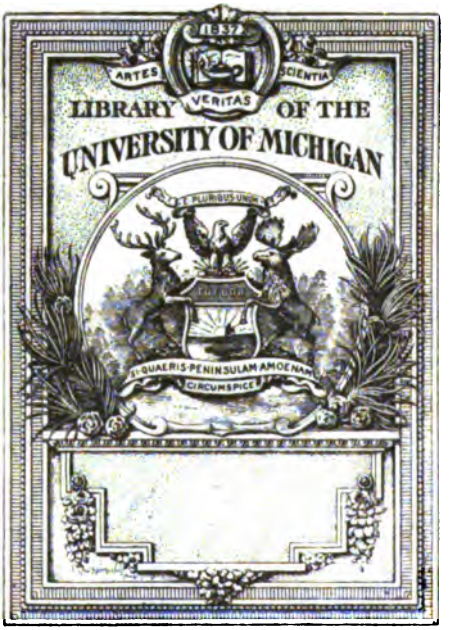
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THE HATZFELDT LETTERS

Main



THE
HATZFELDT LETTERS

LETTERS OF COUNT PAUL HATZFELDT TO HIS WIFE, WRITTEN FROM THE HEAD-QUARTERS OF THE KING OF PRUSSIA 1870–71

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH, BY REQUEST

BY J. L. BASHFORD, M.A.

TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

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PREFACE

THE letters which form the subject of this volume were written in French by Count Paul Hatzfeldt during the campaign of 1870–71, solely for the benefit of his wife, and without any idea that they would ever be made public.

The public knows him as a diplomat, but these letters, written with all the ease and informality of a family correspondence, throw so much light not only on the great events of 1870–71, but on the character of the writer, that I believe they will be found interesting to many people who only know hitherto of Count Hatzfeldt's public services.

His was a most noble and amiable character, ever occupied with unselfish thought for others, and willing to work for the good of his fellow-creatures without seeking either praise or reward.

At the time of our marriage in 1863, he was Second Secretary at the Prussian Legation in Paris, under the Minister, Count von der Goltz. The French world and the Court of the Tuileries were at that time at the height of their splendour and gaiety, and those years in France were full of brightness and happiness. He remained there till 1866, and, just before the outbreak of war with Austria, he was sent to the Hague as First

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Secretary of Legation. Two years later he was ordered to Berlin, where he held an important post under Bismarck in the Foreign Office.

In 1870, the war having broken out between France and Germany, he accompanied Prince Bismarck, and formed one of the ambulatory Foreign Office which did such good work in the field. Count Hatzfeldt was specially chosen on account of his knowledge of French, he, with several other non-combatants, being diplomatic aides-de-camp; and in the final negotiations for peace at Versailles he took a prominent part. It was during this period that these letters were written, and though many of the incidents related in them are already well known, there is also much that will be of interest to the generation of to-day, to whom the Franco-German war is perhaps a less familiar subject. On his return he was again appointed to the Foreign Office, and Bismarck fully appreciated the excellent work that he did, and for which he was ever noted. The Chancellor used to call him "the best horse in my stable."

Hatzfeldt's first post as Ambassador was at Madrid in 1874. Spain at that time was passing through a most critical period, and to Count Hatzfeldt was attributed the pacific relations which were re-established with the foreign powers. From there he was appointed Ambassador at Constantinople in 1878, the year after the war between Turkey and Russia, and he established the influence of Germany, which to this day reigns in Eastern Europe, and which is one more proof of his valuable diplomatic services.

He was recalled in 1881 to the Foreign Office in Berlin, as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and in 1885 was appointed to the high post of Ambassador in London. Failing health caused him to send in his resignation in the autumn of 1901. His unexpected death, before he had even left his London home at the Embassy, was a real grief to his large circle of friends, not only in his own country, but in most of the capitals of Europe, where he had served, and more especially in London, where he had been known and respected for so many years.

These letters deal with one episode in his varied diplomatic life, but it is an episode which is complete in itself, and may therefore stand alone. This brief outline of his career is added in case there may be some readers to whom the main events of his life are not familiar. It is fitting that his letters should appear in England, where he had so many friends, from the late Queen Victoria and His Majesty King Edward downwards, and where he himself and his memory are so highly appreciated and cherished.

His work was ever directed to the promotion of friendly and durable relations between his own country and England, and during the last days of his life he often gave expression to the hope that the two countries, so destined to be friends, would remember him, and his desire for that unity of spirit which had ever been his dearest wish, and to further which he had devoted so many years of his life.

HÉLÈNE COUNTESS HATZFELDT.

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HATZFELDT LETTERS

MAINZ, *August* 2, 1870

ARRIVED here this morning somewhat tired. Yesterday evening at Cologne. Magnificent demonstration. After passing Deutz, crowds of people all over the square in front of the cathedral. The railway station so chock full that there was no room to let a pin drop: all of them shouting for half an hour without ceasing, and continuously *crescendo*. I was at the window of the compartment, and at times I thought I should become deaf. What was especially nice about it all along the route, was the way all classes of society were mixed. At Essen, for example, a district of factories, there were a number of workmen, all of whom approached Bismarck[1] in order to shake his hand. It was a curious picture: I wish my mother[2] could have seen it. Each of us has received his billet here. I am in a pretty house in the upper part of the city, and I have a superb view reaching as far as Wiesbaden.

[1] Then Graf von Bismarck, Minister of Prussia and Chancellor of the North German Bund: afterwards Prince von Bismarck, Chancellor of the German Empire. Raised to the rank of Graf September 16th, 1865; created Fürst von Bismarck with the predicate Durchlaucht ("Serenity"), March 21st, 1871.

[2] Gräfin Sophie von Hatzfeldt, the mother of the writer of these letters, was a daughter of Prinz Franz Ludwig von Hatzfeldt-Wildenburg-Schönstein. She married Edmund Graf von Hatzfeldt-Wildenburg, and was divorced from him in 1851. She tried to play a part in the social movement with which Lassalle was connected, but failed. She died at Wiesbaden in 1881.

But an abominable bed. I slept, however, and have had my breakfast: they even gave me a bath, and now I am going to my chief, whose house I see from my window.

I hope, little Darling, that you and the children are well. Write to me often. I saw you were a little upset when you said good-bye to the King, who was rather bad himself. But all that changed *en route*. By the time we reached Magdeburg, he was already cracking jokes. He pretended that I was a French officer; and this afforded him much amusement.

Good-bye, Darling; I must leave you. I think a good deal of you and the children, and hope to see you all soon.

Please take the first opportunity to send me as many cigarettes and cigars as possible. Ask Hugo[1] for my address. All my love, and tender kisses.

MAINZ, *August* 3, 1870

I have just this moment got up. I will write a line to you before dressing and going out, as I don't know whether I shall have time to write later.

Our arrival here yesterday morning was not exactly a source of amusement for us. Each of us received a *billet de logement*, and then we were abandoned to our fate. We had a long search for our houses. The result was that we were placed on the mountain a league away from the Rhine, each of us in a different house. I had a great deal of trouble to find mine; and when I found it, everybody was asleep, and I secured a tiny room in the second storey with an abominable bed. The owner of the house is a wine-merchant. They afterwards discovered who I was, and since then I have been overwhelmed with attentions and care. They wanted to give me a superb salon downstairs. This I refused;

[1] Hugo, Baron Landsberg.

but they gave me an excellent bed, in which I have just had a very good night. I have a bath in the morning; and am not left time enough to put my wants into words.

My chief is living fifty paces off in a very fine house, belonging to a very rich wine-merchant, dealing in sparkling wines, and the whole family make the greatest efforts to be amiable to him. We spent the evening in a very pretty garden, where torrents of the best wine and of an excellent beer, that was almost iced, were constantly brought to us. You need not alarm yourself —I was tolerably sober!

The horses and trunks arrived at last yesterday evening. My poor beasts had to wait two hours in the street till a stable could be found. At last a sort of shed was discovered for them. L'Alezan and the Bay are both coughing.

I am beginning to think that our chance of obtaining a near view of military events is very poor, and that we shall remain pretty quiet here for a time. Perhaps the King will proceed to the front; but it is very doubtful that he will take us with him. That would not be at all amusing, and I should be horribly bored if I could not be with them. In any case write to me here, or care of the Foreign Office, or direct to "Mathildenstrasse, care of Nassauer." I am very impatient to hear from you.

Don't forget cigarettes and cigars. I hope, Dearest, that you are well, and that you are taking care of yourself. Have you any news of your father? How is Croy's[1] horse? My kisses to the children. I hope Nelly[2] is good. Write to me often. Tender kisses.

[1] Prinz von Croy, Captain in the Prussian Gardes du Corps (Life Guards), brother of Gräfin Benckendorff, the mother of the present Russian Ambassador in London.

[2] Comtesse Helene von Hatzfeldt, elder daughter of Graf Hatzfeldt, b. 3 March, 1865; m. Prince Max Anton Karl zu Hohenlohe-Oehringen, 11 Feb., 1890; d. 21 May, 1901.

What has become of Otto?[1] Where is my mother? Don't show my letters to anyone but Hugo. All that we hear goes to show that the French are shooting extremely badly, and that they don't know how to use their chassepots.

MAINZ, *Thursday, August* 4, 1870

I have just this moment received your Monday's letter, and am very pleased to have some news of you at last, and to know that you are all well. One of the great annoyances of our present condition is, that our letters remain so long *en route*, and our telegrams still longer. One is a bit spoilt in these matters, and it is difficult to imagine that as regards postal communication Mainz is now further from Berlin than it is in ordinary times from Constantinople. Above all, don't be alarmed, my little Darling. Unfortunately there is no reason why you should be; and my letter of yesterday must have considerably reassured you. The Headquarters Staff is much too numerous, as far as one can judge; and the King, if he goes nearer to the scene of action, will designate those who are to accompany him. I very much doubt if Bismarck will be allowed to take more than two people with him: in which case he is sure to take Bismarck-Bohlen[2] and Keudell,[3] who are both soldiers. You see that I stand a very poor chance of getting a close view of the French. I shall not be at all astonished if I have to make a prolonged stay here, where indeed I feel as comfortable as possible from a

[1] Otto, Baron Loë, a cousin of Graf Hatzfeldt. He was in the diplomatic service, and was very much spoken of at the time of his quarrel with Prince Bismarck in connection with the *Reichs-Glocke*, a Roman Catholic paper started to annoy the Prince.

[2] Captain Graf von Bismarck-Bohlen, nephew of the Chancellor, Captain in the Dragoons of the Prussian Guard.

[3] Robert von Keudell was appointed assistant in the Berlin Foreign Office by Herr von Bismarck in 1863, the year after he himself was made Minister of Foreign Affairs and President of the Ministry of State. In 1872 he became German Ambassador at Constantinople; in 1876 he was appointed German Ambassador at Rome; and in 1887 he retired.

material point of view. It is true that it is not at all amusing. I know scarcely anybody, and we are a league away from the Rhine, and from our acquaintances; but I shall try to shake down. The horses are here, and in pretty good condition: from this evening on, I shall begin to take some rides.

My mother's letter that you have forwarded to me is absurd. She says that since our return from Schlangenbad we have almost forbidden her our house. Not a word of interest; but this is almost natural under the circumstances. I shall answer that nobody has prevented her from coming to see us.

It is a great pity that you are not here. I am writing close to my window, from which I have a splendid view. Without glasses I can see from here the cupola of the Russian chapel near Wiesbaden. If I were to give myself the trouble, I should certainly be able to make out the forester's house where we ate those good dough-nuts!

Good-bye, Dearest. I trust to your promise to be prudent, and to take care of yourself. I have a presentiment that our separation will not last so long as we thought, and that we shall soon see one another again, when we shall be able to pay a nice visit to the country or take a trip to the mountains before the winter.

A thousand kind messages to the children. All my love and lots of kisses.

P.S.—August 4th, 1870. I was just going to send my letter to the post when I learnt that we shall probably not stop here. Perhaps we shall leave to-morrow. But you must not get anxious on this account. Unfortunately we shall be, it seems, so far from military events, that we shall see absolutely nothing. Bismarck is quite certain to remain with the King, and he will take his nephew with him, as he is constantly in need of him. But we shall all remain in the rear. You will doubtless be pleased at this; but you will admit that

it is not amusing for us. When you send cigarettes, etc., you must put yourself in communication with Gundlach in order to know what quantity can be sent. You won't be able to send much at a time; so you must send frequent supplies. Don't forget to do so. It is the only material thing, the absence of which is a real privation to me.

Always send me plenty of details when you write; tell me how you and the children are, how you spend your days, whom you see, where you go of an evening, how my acquaintances and friends are, etc., etc. Everything of this kind interests me. Have you sent for the money from Alfred?[1] I am very glad that I was able to leave you so much money. You have 1,500 thalers (three five-hundred notes), the 1,250 from Alfred, —that makes 2,750 thalers: besides that, nearly 400 thalers of your own—total 3,150 thalers[2] or 12,000 francs. If your father sends you 2,000 francs, you will have 14,000 francs at your disposal. Take care of your money and be reasonable with your expenses. If you manage your house well, you ought to do with very little. Above all, enter everything with the date, so that later on you can show me your accounts. Have you put the horse into harness? and how does he go? Good-bye, Dearest. If you want me to be pleased, show by your letters that you are easy in your mind and have confidence. My only anxiety is to think that you are nervous and uneasy. There really is no reason why you should be so. I am in very good health and we shall unfortunately remain very far from the battle-fields. So be easy about me.

Tender kisses. Send me at once one of your photographs.

What has become of Otto?

I have just received your second letter of Tuesday, which has given me much pleasure.

[1] Alfred, Prinz zu Hatzfeldt-Wildenburg, brother of Graf Paul Hatzfeldt.

[2] 1 thaler = 3 shillings.

MAINZ, *August* 5, 1870

Yesterday the first engagement of a rather more serious nature took place, and it ended in our favour. The telegram of the Crown Prince to the King ran:

> "Brilliant but bloody victory before my eyes: capture of Weissenbourg: Douay's division repulsed in disorder, obliged to abandon its camp and tents. General Douay dead. Five hundred prisoners and one gun in our hands."

I suppose you know this already, but I wanted to confirm the news. It isn't a battle, but at the same time it was a tolerably serious engagement. I am very pleased because it is a good omen, and because it will prove to the men that the French are not so invincible as they claim to be. General Douay's loss will be very painful to them. I suppose the Parisians will not think much of the event.

My trunk is packed, and we are expecting every minute to receive orders to start. We are going to drive—and only for a few leagues in advance; whereas the King will, I think, proceed further with a small suite. You see that we are going to remain in the rear, as I foresaw, so that there will be no danger where we shall be. Consequently, you have no reason to be anxious. As soon as we arrive at our destination, I will seize the first available moment for writing a line to you.

If you see my mother, tell her that she is simply absurd. I went to say good-bye to her the day I left. If she has not been at our house, it is because she did not want to come. Tell her it will give you and the children pleasure, if she comes to see you. I will write to her on matters of business, but she must leave her address with you.

The weather is splendid, but much too hot. The troops must be suffering a good deal from the heat. My health is pretty good.

Now for a commission. Go to the tailor at once (Rössler, Herrnstrasse), and order a uniform frock-coat with two rows of buttons, exactly similar to the one I wore when I left, to be made very quickly. Take the first opportunity of sending it to me. Ask Gundlach when he is sending anything.

Good-bye, Dearest, keep calm and don't be anxious. Take good care of yourself. Don't tire yourself, and write to me often. . . .

MAINZ, *August* 5, 1870
(11 *p.m.*)

I am writing you another line this evening, although I am very tired, as we are definitively leaving to-morrow morning at eight o'clock, and I shall have no time to write later. We can't say that things are arranged very agreeably for us, or that we are treated particularly well. Bismarck does not leave till the day after to-morrow with the King. He takes Abeken,[1] and his nephew with him—by rail; whilst we—Keudell and I—are made to proceed by carriage. We shall be much longer *en route*. It seems that we shall drive to-morrow as far as Alzey, and shall reach Kaiserslautern the day after to-morrow—always a long distance in the rear of the scene of action, so that you have absolutely no grounds for fear or anxiety. I shall try to write to you to-morrow evening, but as we shall be further off, you will perhaps be one or two days without a letter.

[1] Heinrich Abeken was originally a student of theology, and was Pastor of the Prussian Legation at Rome when Bunsen was Minister there. In 1841 he went to England by order of King Friedrich Wilhelm IV., in connection with the plan of an Anglo-German Bishopric at Jerusalem. He subsequently received an appointment in the Foreign Office, and was very highly thought of by his Sovereign as well as by Bismarck. He died in Berlin in 1872.

It seems that a good many French prisoners passed through Frankfurt this morning, and that there were some Turcos amongst them. Food and drink were given to them. Four hundred are expected to come through here to-night. I should have liked to see them, but I am already too tired, and have too much fatigue in store for me to-morrow, to go to the station now.

Did you read in the French newspapers the news of the "gr-r-r-ande" victory at Saarbrücken? It is very funny! We had three companies there which had received a formal order to retire. Notwithstanding this order, they held their ground for nearly a week in the face of three French divisions. But the French have been again dislodged from Saarbrücken and they are now bombarding that unhappy open town!

I don't know what we may expect now. Some people think that we shall have to wait a long time before anything of importance happens, whilst on the other hand, I have seen officers of the General Staff who think that there will be a big battle very soon. In any case I fear I shall not see much of it all, and that you have no chance of coming to nurse me. My health continues to be pretty good, but I won't boast (*unberufen*); and you know that continual bustle agrees very well with me.

I have received a letter from Franziska:[1] she wants some news of Walter.[2] But where are we to get this news from?

Did you go in broad daylight to the "Triangle"?[3] In any case that was bad enough. You had better tell my

[1] Baroness Walter Loë, *née* Comtesse Hatzfeldt.

[2] Baron Walter Loë, husband of the above and a cousin of Graf Hatzfeldt. Before the war he was military attaché to the Prussian Embassy at Paris. Afterwards General-Colonel of Cavalry with the rank of Field-Marshal.

[3] The "Triangle" was a block of houses in Berlin where Graf Hatzfeldt's mother lived.

mother to come in the morning before a certain hour. This afternoon I received your letter dated Thursday. I was very glad to get it: I hope you will write to me very often. . . .

ALZEY, *Saturday, August* 6, 1870

We left Mainz at eight o'clock this morning by carriage and arrived here about one o'clock. It is a small town of about five thousand inhabitants, tolerably pretty, with very fine ruins of an old Château. We dined at the *table d'hôte* at a small inn. All the inhabitants are giving themselves a great deal of trouble to be agreeable to us. We were taken this evening to the Casino, a private place of meeting of the citizens where there is a pretty garden. We passed the evening there smoking, having supper and chatting.

We have just returned, and when I have finished this letter we shall go to bed, as we have to get up before six to leave again for Kaiserslautern, where the King will join us again to-morrow evening.

I hope that we shall then all remain together, and that we shall end by seeing something. For the moment we are anxiously looking forward to some news. The Crown Prince continued to advance to-day, and it is just possible that a serious engagement has taken place. It is to be hoped he did not advance without having all his forces at hand. It seems that the French are concentrating all their forces, and I imagine that they will try to make some big *coup*. The engagement at Weissenbourg was a very bloody one, especially in the streets. The French fired from the windows and from the roofs of the houses. Our men burst open the doors: there was a terrible struggle at the point of the bayonet and both sides also used the butts of their rifles. They are not in the least afraid of the French; and it seems they took to laughing when they saw the ways of the Turcos.

What is really very curious is the noise they are making at Paris over the incident at Saarbrücken. Three companies of our men against several French divisions! I am pretty well, so don't trouble yourself at all. But be sure to write to me very often. I hope to be able to write to you to-morrow from Kaiserslautern. . . .

KAISERSLAUTERN, *Sunday Evening August 7*

All the news[1] has been telegraphed to Berlin, so you doubtless know what has happened. You can understand that we are very pleased, and that all we hope is, that things will continue in this way. We arrived here about three o'clock, and immediately went to the station to meet the King, who arrived about five. It was there that we first heard the news, and read the original despatches. The Emperor must be furious. Yesterday at Wörth it was not an engagement, but a regular pitched battle. We took *six thousand* prisoners, thirty cannons, six mitrailleuses, and two eagles. MacMahon's troops were thrown back in disorder. I am told that the French fought very well: the Turcos like lions.

Meanwhile General Göben[2] advanced on Saarbrücken with three divisions, and he also routed the French. The losses on both sides are very great. It is said that MacMahon is himself wounded. I am very curious to hear what will be done at Paris to conceal what has happened or to alter the reports.

Instead of alighting here, the King has gone on to

[1] The news of the battle of Wörth.

[2] August von Göben, who died in 1880, was born in 1816. In 1836 he fought in Spain for Don Carlos; in 1864 he was present at Düppel; and in 1870 he was the General in Command of the Army Corps at Mars-la-Tour and Gravelotte.

Homburg. We shall follow him to-morrow morning at seven o'clock, and we hope to catch him up and not to leave him again. You see that so far, it has not been very dangerous for us. The King looked very pleased, but serious. Bismarck was radiant.

Keudell and I are stopping here at the house of a rich timber merchant who overwhelms us with civilities. He gave us a magnificent dinner with Champagne and Bordeaux. I have just been asked to go down to supper; but I refused in order that I might write to you. After that I shall go to bed. The town is tolerably pretty—twenty thousand inhabitants—all the streets are paved. For the first time since 1848 I have seen a quantity of black, red and gold flags (the colours of the old Empire of Germany). And we are in Bavaria! I assure you that all this is very interesting. I found a number of old acquaintances here, and have made several new ones. We have already killed one of our carriage horses, and have bought another. My horses still go pretty well—I mustn't boast (*unberufen*); they did four hours yesterday and seven to-day, the weather being terribly hot. I am pretty well myself.

Wrochem,[1] whom you know, saw the French prisoners yesterday at Frankfurt. The Turcos were stared at as if they were curious beasts, and they took advantage of this to sell the lace from their uniforms. They even sold some of their clothes as curiosities, in order to get some money. They were supplied with food and drink. The French officers behaved very well. Serious and reserved, they accepted a glass of wine and a piece of bread, but declined everything else. The men, on the contrary, asked for food, declaring that they had not eaten anything for three days. They say that they were told they would beat us easily, as we had not more than 200,000 men to oppose them.

[1] Herr von Wrochem, a landed proprietor, who was with the Red Cross Ambulance Corps.

God grant that things will continue as they have begun. In that case it will be soon over perhaps. But it has cost a good deal of blood, and will cost a good deal more. Poor Senfft,[1] a hussar, who used to be often at Bismarck's of an evening, and was very fond of getting drunk, was killed by a shell that struck him in the chest. And there are many more, of whom we know nothing. I believe the cavalry of the Guards have not yet been under fire. I think I shall hear something about them at Homburg to-morrow, and shall then be able to tell you if our friends and acquaintances are safe and sound. . . .

HOMBURG, *August* 8, 1870
(2 *p.m.*)

I arrived here an hour ago and have received your letters of the 4th and 5th inst. You complain of my silence, and I have written *every day* up to now! But I do not know how long my letters remain *en route*. I am taking advantage of a courier to send you this one.

The journey here from Kaiserslautern was very interesting. Troops and convoys without ceasing. Here there is an incredible crowd. We halted for a couple of hours without any roof to take shelter under, our horses in the street. So far we still get good news. You must know all this through Gräfin von Bismarck.[2] People say they can hear the roar of cannon a few leagues from here. The Crown Prince continues to advance.

We have already taken more than eight thousand prisoners. Let us hope that it will go on like that. In that case I hope we shall all soon be over the frontier. We don't know anything yet; but it is believed that the King will stop here to-day. If we leave to-morrow, I

[1] Major Senfft von Pilsach, Major à la Suite of the Army: Court-Marshal of H.R.H. the Crown Princess.

[2] Gräfin von Bismarck, wife of the Chancellor.

shall try to write you a line before we start. The place is full of acquaintances. I have just had a long chat with Lynar,[1] Lüttichau[2] of Dresden, Wrochem and a number of others. You would laugh heartily if you were to see the room that Keudell and I have. You know how I am spoilt as regards material comforts! Well! I am quite indifferent to all that now: I would even eat dry bread—it is all the same to me, if only I have got some cigarettes!

One thing ought to please you—that is, that the fair sex does not even exist here. So you can't have the pleasure of becoming jealous. Your story about the Zoological Gardens is absurd. You are always finding mares' nests. I should have preferred to know how Croy's horse is getting on. By the way—I have asked, and am told that the Guards have not yet gone to the front. Consequently he is still safe and sound. As soon as possible I will try to get some news of Hermann[3] and Stanislas.[4] Let us hope that everyone is well. Your idea of coming to Mainz was very clever! You see how nicely you would have been caught if you had done so! It would have been literally impossible to follow us here.

It seems that the French officers who have been taken prisoners are amazed at the condition of our troops and at the way they attack. They say they could not have believed it possible. Anyhow it is a good beginning—more than eight thousand prisoners, thirty cannon, two eagles, six mitrailleuses; and Forbach and Hagenau taken!

Good-bye, Darling Touti, I hope this won't last long,

[1] Prinz Lynar, Councillor of Legation (First Secretary) of the Prussian Embassy in Paris before the war.

[2] Graf von Lüttichau, Gentleman-in-Waiting to the Queen of Saxony.

[3] Prinz Hermann von Hatzfeldt, the present Prinz von Hatzfeldt, Duke zu Trachenberg.

[4] Prinz Stanislas von Hatzfeldt, brother of Prinz Hermann by the first wife.

and that we shall soon see one another again. That is to say—provided we don't go to Paris, which I should like immensely! I should so much like to pay a visit to Petit Val![1]

Don't be idle this time: write to me very often—every time that there is a courier. You have no idea how impatiently we look for our letters. . . .

I too immediately thought of Thérèse.[2]

HOMBURG, *August* 8, 1870

I hear there is a courier to-morrow morning; and, although I am very tired, I will take advantage of his leaving and will write you a line. Who knows whether I shall have the time, or be able to do so to-morrow? So far we know nothing; but it is very possible that we shall leave for another destination. In any case the King will leave one or two hours in advance of us. Tresckow[3] arranged that, and I am sure that you promised to make him a present if he always left us behind. One thing is certain—that Keudell and I are simply furious.

If this goes on long, we have decided to ask Bismarck to give us permission to return to Berlin! So you will have a chance perhaps of seeing us sooner than you expected!

I have not sat down once since the morning, except at dinner at Bismarck's, if indeed one can call such a meal dinner. I was terribly hungry and ate a huge omelette with some salad—the only thing it was possible to get. There is no news, as far as I know.

I suppose we shall learn something to-night or to-

[1] Petit Val, near Paris, the property and residence of Mr. Moulton, father of Gräfin Paul Hatzfeldt.

Mademoiselle Thérèse de Wittembourg, Gräfin Hatzfeldt's former governess, who lived with Mrs. Moulton.

[2] Lieutenant-General von Tresckow, Aide-de-Camp General to H.M. the King of Prussia (afterwards Kaiser Wilhelm I.).

morrow morning, and that our departure will depend on that. In any case we shall have to get up at six, in order to be ready for every emergency. It is raining in torrents, which is very unfortunate for the troops. I thank Heaven for having permitted me to find a stable for my poor horses at last: I thought they would have to spend the night in the public square.

You see from all these little details that we are leading a camp life. This morning on our way from Kaiserslautern we passed three dead horses on the high road. All this is deeply interesting. Let us hope that things will go on as they have begun.

Do you know what Keudell has just said to me? He says, that I am to be admired for writing to you every day. He is lying perfectly quiet in his bed; and I shall do likewise, as I am really tired. But still I assure you that I am feeling very well. All this movement is good for me and will be better than a 'cure' at Marienbad. . . .

SAARBRÜCKEN, *Tuesday*
August 9, 1870

We left Homburg at 1 p.m. and arrived here at 5.30. Bismarck had already arrived, and is installed in a house opposite to us with a charming family, where we had an excellent dinner. All along the road we were surrounded by innumerable troops, and here we found the first battlefield full of interest. Fifty yards off are the heights[1] where the French were encamped and well fortified. Several people have already been to see them, and it seems that they were almost impregnable. Of course the battle cost a good deal of blood; but the moral effect of the attack and of the *élan* of our soldiers has been enormous. After the first attack (against three companies) the French entered here, as you know. It seems from what the inhabitants

[1] The heights of Spichern.

have told me that they were dying of hunger, and looked like bandits. In the town itself they behaved fairly well; but in the suburbs they pillaged, and robbed everything they found. It was infamous of them afterwards to bombard an open town that offered no resistance. There are an enormous number of wounded here, who are being looked after with the greatest devotion by the inhabitants. There are some also in this house, but I have not seen them yet; and you can easily understand that I don't much want to see them.

Lehndorff[1] has just told me that the King is very well. I believe nothing has been decided yet as to how long we shall stay here. Everything depends on the news from the army.

We are pretty far off from the scene of action. The army continues to advance, and fighting is probably going on the whole time. What we don't know is, where the French will make a stand for a big battle. What is certain, is that so far they have been retiring—this is called in military language "to effect a concentration in the rear." If we go on as we have begun, the first big battle will take place some distance the other side of the frontier. I for my part am convinced that the French army will fight very well, but it is certain, nevertheless, that they have lost their confidence and that they are a bit demoralised in consequence of the three last reverses. They certainly did not anticipate them. Despite too what St. Priest says, I think that the Parisians will soon be discouraged. They will not be able to stand repeated losses for a long time, as well as an invasion of the enemy. If this sort of thing continues, I should not be surprised to hear of disturbances at Paris, and even in the provinces. There is a large party that was hostile to the war from

[1] Graf von Lehndorff, A.D.C. to King Wilhelm of Prussia, afterwards Aide-de-Camp-General to Kaiser Wilhelm I.; now living at his country seat near Königsberg as a retired General of Cavalry.

the very beginning, and which has not dared to say anything up to the present, as long as it was a question of military glory; but will shout all the louder now, if success does not accompany the efforts of the army.

I myself am quite cheery and sprightly, and am interested beyond expression. All this movement does me a great deal of good. I have to dispense with a number of things. I don't know whether I shall have a bed to sleep in presently. What am I saying? Keudell has just taken his coat off and is lying down on a miserable little sofa and a chair; so I rush off to my bed, and fetch him my two mattresses, my rug, etc. I have made up a bed for him on the floor, and I myself shall lie down on the springs of the bed. I don't care a fig about the inconvenience however. To-morrow morning I shall get up early and ride the Chestnut, if he is in good form (he is camping out in the open); and I shall take a ride to see the mountain that was fortified by the French, or else go to see Walter Loë, who is said to be a league from here.

Good-night, Darling, I am off to bed, but first I am going to write a line to Franziska to tell her that Walter is well. If you see Mimi,[1] tell her that the Cuirassiers of the Guard were close to Homburg yesterday, and that I was told all were well. Write to me very often and take good care of yourself. . . .

SAARBRÜCKEN, *Wednesday*
August 10, 1870

After a not very comfortable night, Keudell and I got up at seven, and were on horseback by eight and started for the battlefield. Our hearts throbbed with interest. There is a fairly long plain, at the end of which is a mountain arranged like an amphitheatre,

[1] Gräfin Schleinitz, wife of Graf Schleinitz the Minister of the Royal Household, *née* Fräulein von Buch.

where the French had entrenched themselves. It was almost absurd to attack them, for they fired thence on our soldiers as if they were hares. We lost an immense number of men at this point, but the moral effect of this insane bravery has been enormous. This is clear from a mass of letters addressed by French officers to their relatives, which were found afterwards. Prince Karl[1] was somewhat in our way during our ride. We did not want to join his suite, and so we lost some time. I saw from a distance the ditch where hundreds of corpses were buried; and we passed a quantity of dead horses. It was unfortunately too late to ride up the mountain itself, where some dead are still lying. Three were found a little while ago. When we got back to the town, I saw an unfortunate wounded French soldier being transported: another prisoner accompanied him on foot. Both of them belonged to a foot regiment of the line. There is a hospital where there are a number of them, but it is repugnant to my feelings to go there. I can't do anything for them, and it would look as if one took a delight in their misfortune. Enormous numbers of troops are continuously passing through the town: they are advancing to follow the army. There are also convoys of ammunition and provisions without end, and of artillery, etc. It is said that our outposts are near Metz; and it is added that the French are so demoralised, that when they meet our troops they throw away their rifles and run off or surrender. It is also said that General Frossard has committed suicide; or at least one hears from the prisoners of his corps that he has disappeared. From another quarter people assure us that disturbances have broken out at Châlons; that there is a kind of panic at Paris; and that the friends of the Empire are packing up because an abdication, or even a revolution is expected. God knows what is true in all this.

[1] Prince Karl of Prussia.

To my great astonishment, I have just received an invitation to dine with the King. The dinner is at four o'clock, and they say that everything is of the most frugal nature. I have therefore taken the precaution to breakfast at a cook-shop that is in this house. Happily we have not got to put on any special uniform or dress: I go in the clothes I am wearing, and the only luxury I shall indulge in is a clean shirt.

We don't yet know how long we shall remain here; but I have a presentiment that we shall leave soon in order to enter France. This is clear if the army has continued to advance. I am very curious to see the faces they will pull on the other side of the frontier when they see us arrive. In this case the twenty louis that I purchased at Mainz will render me important service, for we shall pay for all we want.

I beg of you, my child, to send my frock-coat by Gundlach immediately, if it is not already on the way. By rolling it up, you can make quite a small parcel of it. I really want it very badly. I must say good-bye, for it is late and the courier leaves at 2.30. I had no letter from you either yesterday or to-day, and that is *very annoying*. Try to write a line to me every day, and above all take note of the hours when the courier leaves. There is one leaving the Foreign Office every day.

Tell me how you have arranged your household, and how much you spend on it per month. . . .

SAARBRÜCKEN, *August* 10, 1870
(*Evening*)

I have just heard that there is no doubt about our leaving to-morrow morning. I will send you another line by the courier, as I shall perhaps have no time to write to-morrow.

It is said that we shall go to St. Avold, a place some

leagues the other side of Forbach, in the beautiful country of France that I did not think I should see again after this fashion. God knows how it will all end. But it is quite certain that at Paris they now know what they have to think of recent events. We have seen in the last number of the *Cologne Gazette* telegrams from the Emperor Napoleon himself, who admits his defeats. What is also certain is, that Ollivier has fallen, and that the Empress has charged Marshal Palikao (celebrated for having robbed so much in China) to form a ministry. It seems to me that this is the beginning of the end, if we continue to advance without any hindrance or accident. I dined with the King. There were about twenty persons. A very frugal dinner! The King looks exceedingly well, and is in the best of spirits.

Before we left, he came up to me and asked after you. He already knew, I don't know how, that you had passed the evening with the Queen, making bandages for the wounded.

The weather is abominable—a downpour without ceasing. My poor horses pass the night in the open air. The Chestnut was in grand form this morning. I am thinking of doing the journey to-morrow on his back in order to accustom myself to long rides.

Did I tell you that Prince Friedrich Karl[1] captured a convoy on the railway containing provisions for ten days for the French army? It is hard for them, for it seems that they are dying of hunger—poor fellows! I could not make up my mind to go to see the French wounded, and I think that you will share my feelings. They are being cared for and fed to perfection, whereas it seems that our wounded are ill-treated by the French population.

Good-bye, my Touti; my next letter will be dated from French soil. . . .

[1] Prince Friedrich Karl of Prussia.

ST. AVOLD, *First French Town*
August 11, 1870, 9 *p.m.*

I am so terribly tired that you must not be angry with me if I only write a line this evening. I had a good deal to do this morning, and then we left Saarbrücken at noon on horseback. It was a four hours' ride, very pleasant: showers every moment. The Chestnut was perfect, but a little timid. The whole way there were troops and convoys of artillery, etc., which made an infernal row; and, besides, we were a numerous party, the King's Aides-de-Camp and others. After we left Forbach, the population were *serious*, but without demonstration. This is a small town of from ten to twelve thousand inhabitants. The whole place is full of troops. We are all lodging together in the same house, and we have sentinels at the door. Our cook gave us a plain dinner but eatable, and now we are going to bed.

I suppose we shall remain quiet to-morrow. We are only a few leagues distant from the French outposts, and it would be absurd to allow the King to proceed further. It seems that Bazaine has taken the supreme command of the French army, and he is capable of trying the offensive. Our officers are quite calm. Our troops are three times as numerous; their successes have given them the greatest confidence; and their bravery is at least as great as that of the French. So we await events without boasting or bragging, but with confidence. In any case it seems to me that things can't go on as they are, and that we shall soon have something decisive. I am very well—but I mustn't boast (*unberufen*)—I think a good deal of you and the children, and I am looking forward to seeing you all again. Let us hope that will be soon.

Good-night, Dearest, I am really very tired and I am falling asleep.

We have all been without any news from Berlin for three days. I hope to have some to-morrow. . . .

ST. AVOLD, *August* 12, 1870

The courier is just off and I have only time to tell you that I am quite well, and that I often think of you and the children.

Lots of love.

ST. AVOLD, *August* 12, 1870
(*Evening*)

This morning I could only send you one line before the courier started. He took yesterday evening's letter too. My letters may not be long, but I have written to you every day. You don't know how difficult it is to do so sometimes. Here, for example, Keudell and I occupy only one room, which is rather small, and we have the office here besides, that is to say, *five persons* who are writing and working from seven in the morning till ten at night. I am obliged to wash myself at a corner of the mantelpiece. The poor chaps have gone off to bed now, so that at last I have a little quiet and a corner where I can write.

After receiving yesterday your letter of the 8th, I got your letter of the 7th only this morning. It greatly interested me. You have had the advantage of me, for I haven't yet spoken to a single French prisoner. To-day, however, I had to ask the Maire for some information. He had been arrested, but was set at liberty again by the King's order. You should have seen his beaming face when I addressed him in French. He was so pleased, that he actually wanted to force me to come to live at his house. The inhabitants are perfectly quiet and pacific—at least those of them that are left, for I think that nearly all the better-off bourgeois have fled. In walking through the streets I remarked that a number of people greeted me by taking off their cap. After dinner this evening, at about seven o'clock, we ordered the horses—old Abeken and I—and took a short ride on the road to Metz. We rode for about four or five kilomètres and then returned because it was

getting dark. Our troops are scattered about everywhere, so there is no danger. You can be quite easy as to this: I am neither sufficiently fond of war, nor sufficiently imprudent to expose myself without any object.

It is said that we are going to leave to-morrow in the course of the day in order to advance a little. I don't know if this is true; but in any case it won't be far, because the place for the King is not at the outposts. If the weather is fine, I shall ride the Chestnut. He is very good and quiet, but a little more timid than I like. This morning he made a buck-jump that took me by surprise, but I did not part company with him—and that was the main thing.

I bought from my friend Ignaz,[1] a pair of huge top-boots which I intend to wear. This will be superb; it is a great pity that you can't see me, for you would be immensely amused. You ask me what is going to happen. I assure you that nobody knows; but it seems to me that we ought soon to have a big battle. Perhaps it will have taken place by the time you get this letter. If the French get beaten again, as we hope will be the case, I suppose that we shall advance without allowing ourselves to be stopped any more. If the *affaire* is undecided, or if we are beaten, we shall have to begin over again. In any case it seems to me that the Empire is going adrift. The change of ministry with Palikao and Jérôme David; the loan of a milliard; the forced issue of bank-notes; all this discloses a situation that is almost desperate.

I am very well, but my external appearance is funny, I can assure you. Not only am I so dirty, that you would not like to touch me with a pair of tongs, but I haven't shaved for three days, and my clothes are beginning to look crumpled. I beg of you to send me a frock-coat.

We are all panting for the capture of a big city, so as to be able to have a bath! . . .

[1] Baron Ignaz Landsberg, a rich Westphalian country gentleman: he married a Princess Croy.

FAULQUEMONT, *August* 13, 1870
(9 *p.m.*)

I am terribly tired, but I won't go to bed before at least commencing this letter that I hope to despatch to-morrow. We left St. Avold at noon—on horseback of course—and we arrived here at 2.30, surrounded the whole time by interminable columns of troops, all moving in the same direction. The weather was fine but a little warm. Here we have had the good luck to find very fair lodgings, having sent an employé of the police in advance to find quarters for us. It is a very small town. There are masses of troops: some of the houses are entirely empty, the owners having run away and abandoned them. I immediately struck up an acquaintance with our hostess, a woman of forty. I was amiable, and succeeded in coaxing her round, so that she promised me some milk. I am very fond of milk, and it is almost impossible to get it. After dinner —our cook managed to put together a very fair one— we went out for a stroll. But the pleasure of the walk was destroyed for me. A poor old woman came up and complained that some soldiers had carried off her cow. Keudell and I ran about for an hour with her son to try to find the beast, but in vain. If the cow should be found, the men will be severely punished. Anyhow she will be indemnified. On our way back from our walk, we met, amongst other things, a cart containing French prisoners, one of whom was a Turco. They were surrounded by soldiers, who chatted with them and gave them cigars. I spoke to them for a moment. They had not fired a single shot, and had let themselves be captured whilst they were chatting. The King is in a small village a league distant from here. It is said that we shall leave to-morrow and that we shall proceed in the direction of Nancy. I shall be very pleased if we do, for we shall certainly be able

then to have a bath and to get our linen washed. The country we traversed to-day was lovely. You would have liked to have been with us on "Cocodette."[1] I hope you have heard from your family. You must tell them to send their letters to some friend in London who will forward them to Berlin. It is said that our outposts are already before the walls of Nancy; that several regiments are before Metz; and that others have already passed the Moselle. And yet, no sign of life from the French army! I can't comprehend this! We thought at first, when Bazaine took the command, that they would try to reassume the offensive, and then that they would defend the passage of the Moselle. This of course is purely personal conjecture, for we have no exact information from the General Staff, which keeps all it knows to itself. It seems to me in any case, that all will probably be revealed very soon and that the French army ought to decide to make a stand against us somewhere. Unfortunately there is no doubt that a horrible butchery is being prepared. . . .

Have you seen Herr von Holstein?[2] He left us at Saarbrücken. I asked him to call on you.

(*Sunday Morning*)

Bismarck wants us, so we are off to join him. He is about a league from here.

(*Later*)

We are off in a few minutes, but I don't know our destination. Shall write this evening.

Postscriptum.—We leave in an hour on horseback and shall ride in the direction of Metz, but shall not go far and shall be some distance from the outposts. There is no reason for anxiety. Your idea of the

[1] "Cocodette," a pony belonging to Gräfin Hatzfeldt spoken of lower down—one of the pair that was in Paris during the siege.

[2] An official of the Berlin Foreign Office. Now the chief of the Political section of that department.

ground being undermined (I have just received your *short* lines of Wednesday) made me laugh heartily. The French had so little time to think about their retreat, that they left behind here two thousand blankets for the army and a million francs' worth of tobacco, all of which we were delighted to carry off for our troops. They considered an invasion to be such an impossibility that they did not think of anything. Good-bye, Dearest, I have put on my big boots and await events calmly. You do the same, but without the boots! . . .

VILLAGE DE HERNY, *August* 14, 1870
(*Sunday Evening*)

We arrived here this morning about eleven o'clock after a nice ride. It was very hot, and there was a lot of dust caused by the columns of troops. For this reason we rode nearly the whole time across the fields. The distance was about ten kilomètres. Here we are quite in the country. We occupy three peasants' cottages. The country is very pretty, and I have taken two long walks to have a look at the neighbourhood. A portion of the peasants have fled; and just imagine, why? Because they were told that we should take all the men between 25 and 48 to make soldiers of them, and to place them at the head of the army and in front in action! I have just been talking about this with my landlord and his wife, who are now laughing at their fears. At the same time it is not very pleasant for this poor country. In the first place they had a bad harvest; then, on the top of this, they had twice to feed the French army, who were dying of hunger, and now our troops. This morning I happened to read the *Siècle* of the 11th, which contained a report of the sitting of the Corps Législatif that decided the fall of Ollivier. Τιγ ω get it to read. They said dreadful things to one another and all but came to

blows. After a very fair dinner, washed down by an excellent light Burgundy, we seated ourselves on some bundles of straw in front of the door of our house. The weather is splendid. All of a sudden somebody came to tell us that the roar of cannon was heard. We walked beyond the village to listen, and we did distinctly hear the sounds, but at a great distance off. It is impossible to know where the sound comes from, and what it means. Perhaps we shall know to-morrow morning. In any case it seems that we have nothing to fear here, considering there are about 100,000 men between us and Metz. It is even probable, so people say, that we shall go away from here to-morrow in order to advance a little more. I am curious to know how things will develop, and at what point the French will try to make a stand. If they don't do so behind the Moselle, it is probable that they will retire as far as Châlons. In that case the first big battle will take place on this side. If we win it, the road to Paris is open for us, for it seems to me that it will be impossible for Paris to make a serious resistance. We may cut off their provisions, and they could not then hold out for long. These are personal suppositions, and it is very possible that I may make a mistake. Of course you understand that one must not speak of this. It is useless to recommend one to be prudent. As I am not a soldier and as I should be of no use as such, I shall not risk my skin needlessly, for I am rather attached to it.

You must have seen a fair number of French now. Over two thousand of them have passed by Berlin, but you don't tell me anything about them. I saw some this morning with their officers, but they were stragglers, who had allowed themselves to be taken.

It is very nasty of Hugo not to have been to see you after promising to do so. Has my mother gone away? and where has she gone? Did she come to see you

again? You don't tell me anything about this. Have you any news of Mélanie?[1] Where are the Alfreds?[2] It is very kind of you to have sent me some more cigarettes. I can stand everything else better, when I know I shall have plenty of them. It is 10.30, my Touti. I am really very tired, and I will now try to sleep. I will leave my letter open so as to be able to add a line before the courier leaves. Pray note, that I too have written every day: and keep my letters. It will perhaps amuse me some day to read them over again. . . .

[*Postscriptum.*]

HERNY, *Monday, August* 15, 1870
(5 *p.m.*)

I was awaked this morning at five and told that we had to leave immediately. At first I thought that bad news had been received, and that we were going to retreat. It was just the contrary. The sound of cannon that we heard last night was no chimera. A bloody engagement had taken place.[3] The King wanted to go there, and we were permitted to follow on horseback. We left at 6.15 and have been to the last outposts. For a good hour we were halted on a raised plain so near to Metz, that I was able to see with my glasses not only the cathedral, but the French working at the fortifications in a detached fort. The result of last night's engagement was to throw the last French corps into Metz. It was a terribly bloody business. I saw a quantity of poor French wounded and of our wounded; very few dead soldiers. In one single field it appeared that there were masses of French, all wounded in the head.

We did not leave to go back till about one o'clock. I

[1] Gräfin von Nesselrode, sister of Graf Paul Hatzfeldt.

[2] Prinz and Prinzessin von Hatzfeldt-Wildenburg. The Prince was brother of Graf Paul von Hatzfeldt, cf. p. 6.

[3] The battle of Courcelles.

admit that I was half dead with fatigue, having scarcely slept at all in the night. Happily, Bismarck offered me a seat in his carriage and I accepted it with enthusiasm. The drive was still interesting, for we passed a mass of bivouacs and troops who had taken part in the fighting. They ran towards us from all sides, and shouted hurrahs without ceasing for the King, and afterwards for Bismarck. Despite all this excitement, I went right off to sleep at last, being no longer able to keep my eyes open. After all, my chief ended by doing precisely the same thing. We got back here about 2 p.m.—so we had had a trip of nearly ten hours. We dined only moderately well.

I suppose we shall leave to-morrow; but our destination is still unknown. It seems a fact that the French are still retiring, in which case there will probably be nothing before Châlons, at least no big battle. What a doleful 15th of August they must be keeping at Paris to-day! If you were there, you would certainly have no fireworks. After all, I am beginning to think that I shall see Paris again. If so, I shall take up my abode in the Rue de Courcelles,[1] and when the trains run regularly again, you can come and join me.

I have just received your letter of Friday the 12th, and I am very pleased to know that you are well. I am also well, only just this moment I have a horrible *migraine*, so that I can scarcely open my eyes. . . .

PONT-À-MOUSSON, *August* 16, 1870
(6 *p.m.*)

I am so tired that I can only write you two lines. The drive was very long, and the heat terrible with clouds of dust. On reaching this place I managed to get a bath. We have just had a mediocre dinner, and the courier is about to start in a moment. It seems

[1] Mr. Moulton, Gräfin Hatzfeldt's father, owned a house in this street in Paris.

that there was a tolerably serious engagement to-day in the direction of Metz.[1] If we have been victorious, as we hope, there will probably be nothing of importance before Châlons. We shall only know this evening. This morning in a little village I met Count Magnis,[2] Chamberlain to the Queen. He was about to return to Berlin, so I begged him to call on you and to tell you that he had seen me quite cheery and well. All the men have fled from this village, which is called Vigny, thinking that we should force them to join our army! Was it not stupid of them? Some of them returned, but when they met our patrols, they tried to run away; so they were fired on, with the result that one was killed and two wounded. Bismarck went to see them with us, and immediately sent them a doctor. All the rich inhabitants have left, or are leaving; but for all that there are plenty of people remaining. There are some shops—in short it is a town, and that is not unpleasant. But I think that if this morning's engagement ended to our advantage, we shall leave again to-morrow; and God knows where we shall go to. Happily I am very well, so do not trouble yourself at all. I have nothing at all the matter with me—I am only a little tired—and then the heat has been intense. I shall feel perfectly well to-morrow. Only I cannot possibly write to-day at any length, so you must be satisfied with this scrawl. Good-bye, my Touti, I hope this will all end soon, and that I shall be back again with you. We will then go to the country somewhere for a while, so that I may have a little rest. As to Petit Val, it will be impossible for me at all events to go there—you might do so no doubt. Good-bye, Dearest, I hope to be able to write to you at greater length to-morrow. . . .

[1] The battle of Mars-la-Tour.

[2] Graf Magnis, Gentleman-in-Waiting to Queen Augusta of Prussia, Knight of Malta.

PONT-À-MOUSSON, *Wednesday, August* 17, 1870
(5 *p.m.*)

Last night, just as I was going to bed, a servant came to tell me that the King was going at four o'clock in the morning to the place where there had been some fighting to-day, near Gorse.[1] They all went except me, for I felt persuaded that nothing would happen this morning, and I was afraid of uselessly tiring my best horse. Keudell and Abeken have just returned from the battlefield. There really was nothing to-day, but it appears that yesterday's engagement was horribly bloody. The result was brilliant for us, because with one single *corps d'armée* we held our ground against more than three French corps up to 4 p.m. In the evening our reinforcements arrived. The final result was also to our advantage, for we prevented the French from making off in the direction of Châlons, which they had intended to do, and we forced them to enter Metz. The losses on both sides are enormous. I have just this minute been told that big Kleist,[2] Prince George's Aide-de-Camp, and—to my very great grief—little Reuss XVII.[3] are dead. Tresckow has, I am sorry to say, just confirmed the news. I am greatly distressed about it. Auerswald,[4] who commands a regiment of Dragoons, I think, got a bullet in the intestines and is despaired of. General Rauch,[5] our Frankfurt friend, had tremendous luck. A shell struck him on the chest at the very spot where he carries his money-bag, and another just grazed his knee. He is being well looked after. I got him some ice to make bandages for his

[1] A village near the battlefield of Mars-la-Tour.

[2] Lieutenant Graf von Kleist, brother of Princess Pless, officer in the Dragoons of the Prussian Guard; killed at St. Privat.

[3] Captain 1st Dragoons of the Prussian Guard, killed at Mars-la-Tour.

[4] Colonel of the 1st Dragoons of the Prussian Guard, mortally wounded at Mars-la-Tour.

[5] General von Rauch, Master of the Horse.

knee. All this is horrible!!! I have just interrupted my letter in order to go down into the street to see a hundred French prisoners of all arms pass. There were two captains also. The poor Dragoons are so decimated that one regiment has now been formed of the two. At first it was said that Bill Bismarck[1] was dead. He had only fallen from his horse, however, and is safe and sound. On the other hand, Herbert[2] has got a bullet in his thigh, but it is of no consequence, and his father is going to bring him here. We shall see him this evening. What horrible slaughter! I am very glad I did not go to see the wretched battlefield. As for knowing what will happen now, it seems that everybody is quite uncertain. Everything depends on the movements of the French, and whether they will try to leave Metz. If they do, there will be another battle; but every day makes their position worse, for we are getting continual reinforcements; and, when we have effected our junctions, they will be in such a minority that, in all probability, they will not be able to do anything. But everybody agrees that they are fighting like lions, with the exception of the cavalry, who are very irresolute. But our men are equally brave and all they want to do is to fight. This morning there were three of them near the railway-station who had fallen out on account of being very tired, and their regiment had left them some distance behind. They asked me the way, in order that they might join it. When I told them where the fighting was going on, up they jumped and started off in hot

[1] Graf Wilhelm von Bismarck-Schönhausen, second son of Graf von Bismarck (afterwards Prince von Bismarck), Lieutenant in the 1st Dragoons of the Prussian Guard. Died 1901.

[2] Graf Herbert von Bismarck-Schönhausen, elder brother of the former. Afterwards Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Minister of State. Resigned office a few days after the dismissal of his father in 1890. Succeeded his father as second Prince von Bismarck in 1898. Died September 18th, 1904.

haste, so as not to miss the fun. A national war is a very sad affair! One can only hope that it will not last much longer.

I have just received your letter of Saturday.

Good-bye, Dearest; I am quite well. Don't be anxious: I shall do nothing imprudent. I hope it will all be at an end soon, and then we will go away together somewhere to some quiet place, where I can have some rest after all this wretchedness.

I am told that the other cavalry regiments of the Guards have not yet been in action. Croy is therefore very probably quite well. Tell Gräfin Benckendorff[1] this. I have not been able to hear anything about Walter Loë or Stanislas.

Don't tell Gräfin von Bismarck anything about her son, before you know what news her husband has judged proper to give her. The Lucca's husband[2] has received a bullet in his neck, but it is not dangerous.

PONT-À-MOUSSON, *August* 18, 1870
(*Evening*)

I have just written to poor Reuss[3] at St. Petersburg to tell him of the death of his brother. I am very sad about it. Poor little "Seventeen"[4] was buried here, and I am told that his brother "Thirteen"[5] was at the funeral. This war is a horrible business. They began fighting again this morning;[6] and I am told that things are going well with us. I am sure to know the result before closing this letter. I did not want to go there this morning, when the King and Bismarck

[1] Gräfin Benckendorff, *née* Prinzessin Croy, mother of the present Russian Ambassador in London.

[2] Baron von Rhaden, husband of Pauline Lucca, the well-known prima donna.

[3] Prinz Heinrich VII., Prussian Minister at St. Petersburg.

[4] Prinz Heinrich XVII. Reuss. Cf. *supra*.

[5] Prinz Heinrich XIII. Reuss.

[6] At Gravelotte.

went, because I thought nothing special would happen to-day, and because I have had enough of looking at the dead and wounded. Here I see them passing the whole livelong day. Herbert Bismarck has not arrived yet. They say he is going on well; but it has not been possible yet to find a carriage to transport him. I have received two letters from you; one of them containing a little flower, which gave me great pleasure. Besides these, I had a letter from Mélanie, who sent me a medal that had been blessed, which is to preserve me from dangers. Although I don't believe in such things, I shall wear it to please her. I assure you that I am very well; you must not be at all anxious. I received a telegram from Franziska at dinner, who asks me for news of Walter. I will do my best to-morrow to get her some, but it is difficult enough to find out where a regiment is, even when one asks the General Staff of the army. I am assured that the cavalry of the Guard have not been engaged, except the two Dragoon regiments, so that all who belong to the Cuirassiers and the Gardes du Corps ought to be safe and sound. Chappuis[1] has just this moment told me that he saw Croy a few days ago, and that he (Croy) was furious that he had been ordered with his company to escort some convoy, so that he had not much hope of being under fire. Tell this to Gräfin Benckendorff with my best compliments. General Rauch is as well as can be expected. He will doubtless be quite well again within a few weeks. The King came back to his quarters here for a moment yesterday evening, on his return from the field of battle; he was deeply distressed about our losses. We do not yet know how long we shall remain here. Everything will doubtless depend on the result of the combats round Metz. If the French army is seriously beaten, and if it retires in the direction of Châlons, we shall follow beyond doubt. Neither the

[1] Captain of the Prussian Gardes du Corps (Life Guards).

declarations of the Corps Législatif nor the organisation of the Garde Nationale will keep us back. As for peace, God knows with *whom* we shall make it, and *how*. One thing is certain—it will be our duty to conclude nothing without obtaining guarantees that for at least fifty years France will not be able to recommence the same game. We want a serious and lasting peace, that will free us once for all, and Europe as well as ourselves, from the insupportable tyranny of France and will allow every country to diminish its army and the taxes that result therefrom.

The whole time I have been writing, carts have been passing under my window filled with wounded Frenchmen. The day before yesterday[1] we took 2,000 prisoners, 7 cannon, and 2 eagles. Franciska says in her telegram that d'Abzac[2] has disappeared. How does she know this? Rauch told me just now that there is a Colonel of the Guides at the hospital here, who was very nice to him at Paris. I intend to go to-morrow to make some inquiries about the French prisoners, and to see if I can do anything for them. Poor fellows! it is not their fault that they were forced into this absurd war. . . .

PONT-À-MOUSSON, *August* 20, 1870

I am very upset at having been too late for the courier last night, but it was not my fault. We did not return till 11 p.m., and Bismarck, who got back an hour before we did, had already sent him off.

Really I have no luck! You remember that on the 18th I did not want to ride out with the rest, being persuaded that there would be nothing to see. I did not want to overtire my horses for nothing. The King with his suite and Bismarck had left at 3 a.m. The whole day passed by whilst we waited for news. At

[1] At Mars-la-Tour.

[2] Well known as A.D.C. to Maréchal MacMahon: related to the Birons.

length at 11 p.m. we learnt that there had been fighting all day, and that they were not coming back, and would pass the night in the open air. So Abeken, Keudell and I decided to go there yesterday morning, if only to take them something to eat. We took one of our carriages. The saddle-horses followed us, and we arrived in this manner as far as Gorse. There were so many convoys and troops there, that it was not possible to get past with the carriage; consequently we had to mount our horses. On reaching the first height behind Gorse, we discovered that we were on the battlefield of the 16th.[1] It is the first time that I have ever seen anything of the kind. Dead horses, corpses, rifles, remains of all kinds, uniforms, etc., all scattered about in all directions. We proceeded as far as Rezonville, where the King had passed the night. The horses were standing at the door ready for him to go to see the battlefield of the 18th.[2] At this moment a terrible storm came on. We sought refuge behind a house. I heard a cracking noise, and we then saw that it came from the house, which was on fire. You can well understand that we looked for another place of shelter, which we found at last in a barn. When the rain was over, we were told that Bismarck was on the battlefield of the 18th, so we rode after him. Masses of troops were encamped on both sides of our route. Everywhere there were signs of a desperate combat—dead horses and corpses. The high road mounts a height and has steep banks on both sides. It was here that General Steinmetz[3] charged with his cavalry, whilst the French were still on both sides of the road. Dead horses and corpses were lying

[1] Mars-la-Tour. [2] Gravelotte.

[3] General von Steinmetz, Commander of the 1st Army. He was born in 1796 and had a brilliant military career; but retired in September, 1870, to a home command in consequence of differences with the Headquarters and with Prince Friedrich Karl. After the war he was made Field-Marshal General. Bismarck called him "a blood-spendthrift," because he was too prodigal of his soldiers' blood.

about everywhere. At last we found Bismarck and his nephew, accompanied by your compatriot, General Sheridan,[1] on the top of the hill. The citadel of Metz was visible without glasses, distant about a league from here. I picked up a mitrailleuse cartridge, which I shall try to bring back with me. We left with Bismarck, and returned to Rezonville, riding by a roundabout way. We visited some houses in a little place called "La Malmaison." In a small house we found about thirty wounded, some of them very severely, who had been there for twenty-four hours, and they had had neither a doctor, nor a mouthful of bread nor a drop of water. We gave all we had; and Bismarck himself presented each of the wounded with something to drink with his own hands! After meeting Pless,[2] who promised to help these unhappy people, we started off across country, in order to get to Rezonville. I followed unwillingly, because the Guards Corps were encamped about five minutes off, and I should have liked to have gone there for a moment. At Rezonville Bismarck took a carriage in order to get back here. I gave some cigarettes to some Frenchmen, and we then followed. This time we took a different route, in order to return from Rezonville to Gorse, thus passing on the other side of the battlefield of the 16th, that we hadn't seen in the morning. Here there was nothing but French corpses, in large numbers; many of them had belonged to the Guard. They must have been

[1] General Sheridan is reported to have said that Bismarck and he once fled before the enemy's bullets. Bismarck read the anecdote aloud out of the *Kölnische Zeitung* after dinner at Friedrichsruh, on December 5th, 1888, and, according to Herr Eugen Wolff, who was present at the time, the Prince made the following comment:—"Not a word of truth in this. The bullets were whistling round our heads, and I said to Sheridan—'I am in the King's service and must not stop here; we must ride as hard as we can down this slope.' Sheridan said this was too foolhardy; but as he continued to hear the whistling of the bullets he came galloping after me."

[2] Prinz von Pless, who was then head of the Voluntary Ambulance Corps (Freiwillige Krankenpflege) at Head-quarters.

exposed to a terrible fire. The losses have been enormous everywhere on both sides. Whatever is said at Paris, however, we have most certainly obtained the advantage, and you will see on the map that Gorse and Rezonville and all that country lie behind Metz. Besides this, we have occupied the railway from Thionville. This portion of the French army is therefore cut off from its line of retreat on Paris. I think they will be left there, and that we shall select strong positions for our troops, and wait till they try to pass. All that would be very nice, if it did not cause such a terrible amount of bloodshed. We are paying for our successes with our best blood. We got back to Gorse at 8.30 and found our carriage there, and arrived here again at 11 p.m. As we left at 8.30 in the morning, we were 14½ hours *en route;* from seven to eight hours we were on horseback, the rest of the time we were driving. I wasn't tired for one moment; but before the storm came on, the heat was disagreeable. During the first few hours my horse was very fidgety; he would not go past the corpses of horses; and the pieces of paper and linen, that were flying about in the air, made him quite mad. He got over it all after he had some leagues behind him. He is a very good horse; but the best one for heavy work is the Bay. It is now thought that we shall remain here for some days.

The Crown Prince arrived this morning, and went to see Bismarck. I saw Schleinitz, who tells me that the population are pretty nasty at Nancy. His Headquarters are now at Vaucouleurs. I shall do my best to get news of M. d'Arbo; but I don't think I have much chance of success. As for protecting Petit Val, we are not there; but of course I shall do all I can. There is no danger, but no resistance must be offered and all necessary provisions must be given.

Adieu, my Darling; I hope you will consider this a long letter. I shall go out when I have finished it to

see Rauch and afterwards poor Rhaden, the Lucca's husband, who was rescued by Lehndorff. His wound is said to be not dangerous, but a very nasty one. It seems quite certain that neither the Gardes du Corps nor the Cuirassiers of the Guard have been under fire up to now. So you can calm Mimi and the Princess Trachenberg. It is not necessary to recommend you to be most prudent in your letters to Petit Val. You must not say a word either about the army or about our whereabouts, nor about any of our plans. Don't go to the hospitals too often without consulting Pesch.[1] Sometimes the diseases there are infectious. Besides, the air there is bad, and you must take care of yourself. . . .

PONT-À-MOUSSON, *August* 20, 1870
(7 *p.m.*)

Do me the favour to telegraph the following to my uncle at Trachenberg,[2] if the wire is open:—"Paul saw Hermann on the evening of the 20th August quite cheery and in good health at Pont-à-Mousson."

Hermann is here with his squadron commanded by Rosenberg.[3] They have to escort 1,500 French prisoners whom we have just seen march past. He is quite cheery and is very well. I am expecting him in order to give him something to eat and drink.

Tell Mimi this at once. Useless to write to Trachenberg because I have just written to my uncle. But send off the telegram at once.

The courier is off, so I must close my letter.

[1] Dr. Pesch, the family doctor of the Hatzfeldts.

[2] Schloss Trachenberg, residence of Prinz von Hatzfeldt.

[3] Captain von Rosenberg of the Cuirassiers of the Prussian Guard—known as an excellent rider.

PONT-À-MOUSSON, *August* 21, 1870

Do me the favour to post the enclosed two letters immediately. One of them is from Hermann, and I want it to arrive as soon as possible.

I have not got much to tell you to-day. A good number of prisoners passed here this morning. I myself saw fifty-two officers, one of whom was a General named Plombin. They were all in good health except ten of them who were slightly wounded. They all had a surly look about them so that I did not care to speak to them. All of them lay or were seated in rows of six in the cart on straw. The General wanted to have a better conveyance. The answer given to him was that there were none here of a better description, and that our own wounded Generals had to put up with this kind. The inhabitants brought them coffee and bread, and then they went away.

Hermann has just this moment left with his squadron to rejoin his regiment. Last night I took him to the Hotel de la Poste to have some supper with me. Everybody stood round him in a circle to see him eat—or rather to see him devour! We filled his pockets with cigars, and he took some chocolate and bottles of wine with him. He looks very well indeed, feels very well and seems quite contented. He is on the best of terms with Rosenberg, his Captain; and Rothkirch,[1] the Lieutenant, told me just now that he was an excellent soldier, behaved very well and was liked by everybody. As he is the only one who can speak French, he serves as interpreter for the whole company for requisitions and for all sorts of intercourse with the inhabitants. *Tell all this to Mimi, who will write about it to her mother.* Ask her too if Schleinitz[2] could not write a line to Tresckow to remind him of his promise to get him promoted to

[1] Lieutenant von Rothkirch, Lieutenant in the Cuirassiers of the Prussian Guard.

[2] Graf Schleinitz, Minister of the Prussian Royal House.

the rank of officer soon. Unfortunately we have lost so many officers, that this ought not to be difficult now.

It is said that we shall remain here another day or two, but I think that nothing is decided. But it seems to me to be certain that for the moment all is over in the direction of Metz. The French army (amongst others, the corps of Bourbaki, Frossard and Canrobert) is so completely surrounded there, that it will not be possible—in the opinion of our officers—for them to escape. It will therefore be of no use for covering the road to Paris. The thing now is to know how many men are still at the Emperor's disposal. They say he has at most 50,000 men, besides the Garde Mobile—and as for the latter, nobody has the slightest fear of it.

Personally, I am convinced that there will be another battle in the direction of Châlons. It seems to me almost impossible that at Paris they will not make a last effort to defend themselves!

Who would have thought that this power of France that they talked so much of would so easily fall to pieces! Without one single victory! without one single success! Nobody would have believed it possible! It is very hard for the Austrians, whose defeat in Italy becomes still more overwhelming. Our friend Richard[1] must be precious furious, for another hope has thereby proved vain. I would give a great deal to spend an hour in Paris without being seen, and to be able to hear what is being said there. I am sure they will try to deceive themselves, just as the Government still goes on stuffing them with lies. According to the newspapers, the Government has made another effort to represent the affair of the 16th as a success, whereas it is quite certain that the French were obliged to retire, and to abandon the battlefield. It is true that we also lost a number of men—but why? Because our troops kept on attacking positions that were en-

[1] Prinz Metternich, Ambassador for Austria-Hungary at Paris.

trenched and almost impregnable. I have seen with my own eyes all the battlefields since that of Saarbrücken, and this has always been the case. I can add still more. The French awaited the attack in strong positions, on the heights, entrenched behind cover and walls; and when our troops arrived, they fired at 1,500 paces and continued to fire as long as possible, inflicting great loss upon them. Our men always had to cross plains several thousand yards broad, exposed to a murderous fire. When after cruel losses they got up to the French, the latter *never* awaited the bayonet attack, but retired. This was confirmed to me by everybody who took part in the fighting near Metz. Personal bravery and impulsive action were beyond dispute on our side. I won't say anything about the leadership and about the Generals, who seemed to me to have been sometimes very improvident. One thing is quite certain, namely that at this moment the Chassepot is infinitely superior to our rifle. Fortunately the enemy in general shoot very badly. The mitrailleuse did some harm in certain cases, when a regiment or a battalion was unlucky enough to find itself just in the line of its fire. But this does not often happen; and several soldiers told me that the bullets from the mitrailleuses constantly passed over their heads. Our artillery has been admirable, and altogether superior to the French artillery. I think I have already told you that the French cavalry has not distinguished itself. Our cavalry was constantly pitted against theirs in the proportion of 1 to 2, and even 1 to 3, and always won. Of course you understand, my Darling, that all these details are for *you, and that you must not show them to anybody else.* People would gossip about them, and I should possibly get into trouble in consequence.

I am very well and am not bored for a moment. There are a number of acquaintances here; amongst

others my fat friend Renard, whom you know. He has been selected to be a Préfet somewhere or other. When I am free, I go to the big square, where I always find some people whom I know. One gets into conversation, sees the troops pass, exchanges news, and watches the prisoners go by. This does not prevent me, I assure you, from thinking a good deal of you and of the children, and of hoping that I shall soon join you.

Good-bye, Dearest; I hope you will consider this a long letter too. Take good care of yourself. Don't go too much to the hospitals, and write often. . . .

I beg of you to send me the epaulettes for my frock-coat, and some cigarettes.

PONT-À-MOUSSON, *August* 22, 1870

A Cabinet-Courier is leaving in ten minutes and as I do not know whether we shall despatch one this evening, I will at least take advantage of this one in order to tell you in a few hurried words that I am quite well. You must not imagine, when my writing is bad, that I am ill. My writing has become very bad. Some days I can hardly write at all, especially when I have not got all my comforts and conveniences, as is often the case here.

I received your two letters yesterday—those of the 16th and 17th—at the same time. It is very good of you to write to me at such length. I hope you will go on doing so.

I have been assured that Bradhurst's son-in-law[1] was quite well. Tell them this if they have not had any news themselves. It is very difficult to get any information about anything whatever.

[1] Mr. Bradhurst was Chargé d'Affaires of the American Legation in Berlin. His son-in-law was an Englishman who held a commission in the Prussian army.

It appears that we are to leave to-morrow, in order to get on a few more leagues towards the front. I hope we shall be quartered in some town: here I have been fairly comfortable. I have at least had a small room to myself. From what they tell me, we shall advance also. The railway to Nancy has been repaired, and my friend Renard is going to take up his quarters there in a few days.

Good-bye, Dearest; if another courier leaves to-night I will try to write another line. . . .

Send some cigarettes.

Please send me the *Norddeutsche Zeitung* every day with the courier.

PONT-À-MOUSSON, *August* 22, 1870
(*Evening*)

This will probably be the last letter I shall write from here. We leave to-morrow for Commercy—a nice little trot of forty kilomètres (25 miles). We have not been badly off here, but I am not sorry at having to leave, because it seems to me that the farther we advance the nearer will be the end of the business. It is said now that the Emperor has left Châlons in order to take up his quarters at the camp of St. Maur near Vincennes with the remainder of the army that he can call his own. If this should be confirmed, I suppose that we shall continue to advance, and that the decisive event will take place under the walls of Paris. As for Paris, even that will present no difficulty. We shall be satisfied by cutting off their provisions, and they will then see what they have to do. The French know now that the last engagements near Metz cost them in wounded alone, whom they have with them, 15,000 men. Adding to these the 6–8,000 whom we have taken from them, as well as the dead and all those who are

missing, we arrive at a very large loss. It is calculated that since the commencement of the war we have put nearly 100,000 of their men *hors de combat*. I went to say good-bye a little while ago to our good friend Rauch, who is very well and hopes to get himself moved in a few days. Then I went to see Count Kanitz,[1] who commands one of the Guards regiments. He has two bullets in his body, but is not bad and hopes to leave soon for Berlin. Poor Rhaden, who has a bullet in his face, is in the same room. He hopes to be moved to Berlin in twelve or fifteen days. Kanitz had his horse killed under him, and his Aide-de-Camp was shot at his side. He says that one can form no idea of the infernal fire to which they were exposed for an hour and a half.

If you write to your mother, reassure her as much as possible. We are not barbarians; and there is nothing to fear. But if, by chance, we get as far as Petit Val, they must see that no attempt is made at resistance in the village; and food and drink must be given to the soldiers. These are necessities that must be submitted to, but a number of people do not understand this. For example, the other day a woman at Herny came to complain because she had been awakened without any consideration for her in the middle of the night! It is of course very hard for the inhabitants to have to feed everybody, but it is still harder to be hungry; and these unfortunate soldiers, always on the march, camping out in all weathers in the open air, must live at least as well as is possible.

The King is very well, and is much pleased with the turn of affairs, but he is terribly distressed at all these

[1] Lieutenant Graf Georg von Kanitz, Aide-de-Camp to Prince Friedrich Karl of Prussia. He married Comtesse Hélène Hatzfeldt, daughter of Graf Maximilian Hatzfeldt, and Comtesse Pauline de Castellane (daughter of Comte de Castellane, Maréchal de France). Being left a widow, this Gräfin Pauline von Hatzfeldt afterwards married the Herzog zu Sagan (Duc de Talleyrand).

losses. I think I told you that Mr. Bradhurst was very well from what I had heard. It seems also that little Dachröder[1] is safe and sound.

There is a good deal of displeasure expressed here, and in all the newspapers also, because of all the fuss made at Berlin over the French prisoners, and with good reason. The prisoners are stuffed with all kinds of good things; and the soldiers, who are shedding their blood in our defence, only get the leavings. I hope you do not act like this. They really do not deserve it. The French shoot at our doctors and at our wounded, and do not even respect the laws of war. And they have the cheek to talk of civilisation!

Good-bye, my Touti. I must leave you. It is time for the courier to start, and I have to do an important commission, namely to buy some wine for our travelling cellar. I am very sorry we are not going to Nancy. They say it is very pretty there. But I hope to pay a visit to the residence of M. le Préfet, my friend Renard.[2] . . .

COMMERCY, *August* 23, 1870
(8 *p.m.*)

We left Pont-à-Mousson this morning at ten o'clock in horrible weather, rain falling without ceasing. This prevented us from riding; but we drove in an open carriage, and I don't regret this, for the country is very pretty. It was just 40 kilomètres (25 miles): we reached this place at 3 p.m. A whole street—not simply a house—had been reserved for us!

As there was no accommodation in the house Bismarck occupied, I took up my abode here next door, and it turned out—I can see you laugh—to be a girls' school! But the place is almost deserted because the parents have taken their children away. The result

[1] Lieutenant in the 1st Dragoons of the Prussian Guard.

[2] Graf Renard, a Silesian nobleman and intimate friend of Graf Paul Hatzfeldt.

is that I have a double-bedded room to myself and a large salon. I was very pleasant to the head mistress, who overwhelms me with attentions. After having been out to eat some madeleines (famous little cakes which you have heard speak of) I lay down in my bed and slept till 5.30 p.m. We dined at six, and Waldersee,[1] Lehndorff, and afterwards General Alvensleben[2] dined with us. I can assure you that we ate and drank not for four, because we were six—I ate enough for fifteen or twenty! We do not want for anything. The dinner was simple but excellent. We have Burgundy, Champagne, White Bordeaux, and Cognac —*enfin*, all sorts of delights! The house where Bismarck is living is charming. Mine communicates with it through the garden, which is full of pretty flowers. Everybody is very kind to us. Unfortunately the pleasure will not last long, as probably we shall leave again to-morrow in order to sleep at Bar-le-Duc. You will see that we are getting nearer and nearer to Paris. If we go on like this—doing 40 kilomètres (25 miles) every day—we shall be there within a week. The main question is, to know whether we shall meet with any resistance *en route*. *Enfin! qui vivra, verra!* If we reach the environs of Paris, I shall ask permission

[1] Graf Alfred von Waldersee belonged to a well-known Dessau military family, several of whom were Generals in the Prussian army. He was born April 8th, 1832, and had a distinguished military career. He was on the Head-quarters Staff in 1866, and in 1870 was Military Attaché to the Prussian Embassy in Paris. In 1871 he was Chief of the Staff, and Governor of Paris whilst the German troops occupied that city. From June to September, 1871, he was Chargé d'Affaires for Germany in Paris. In 1882 he was made Quarter-Master General, and in 1890, after being first attached to Field-Marshal General Graf von Moltke at the General Staff as his substitute, was nominated his successor by Wilhelm II. In the following year he retired, and was made Commander of the 9th Army Corps. In 1900 he became a Field-Marshal, and from September 27th, 1900, to June 4th, 1901, he was Commander-in-Chief of the Allies during the Boxer rising in China. He died 1904. His elder brother, Colonel Graf von Waldersee, fell at Le Bourget at the head of his regiment.

[2] General von Alvensleben, Commander of the 3rd Army Corps.

to go to Petit Val, firstly, in order to reassure them and to protect them, if they want protection; and secondly, to see how they take things.

As we came here to-day, we heard the sound of cannon. They say it is Toul that is being besieged. I am also told that Strassburg must be being bombarded at this moment. The poor Edmonds![1] They must be pretty uncomfortable! If, by chance, we keep Alsace, it will be still worse for them.

I must really tell you a good story about Kutusoff.[2] During the battle of the 18th he went to sleep somewhere on the ground. Some soldiers approached him and finding that he smelt very bad, they thought he had been dead for some time, and covered him with a cloak, as is the custom in the case of dead bodies. If you repeat this story, don't mention my name as the author!

Good-bye, Dearest, the courier is starting soon. Thanks for the cigarettes received this morning. You must send me some at intervals. Don't be anxious again because of my bad writing. I am writing very fast so as to be able to finish this page.

By the way, do you know what will be the day of the month to-morrow? The 24th! I know: and shall think of the day! It is not necessary for me to say, that personally I am charmed that things are moving faster. The end will come all the sooner, and that will be a blessing for the whole world. As for me, as soon as the business is finished, I hope to go and get some rest for a while in the country with you, never mind where. . . .

[1] Graf and Gräfin Edmond Pourtalès. Gräfin Pourtalès was the daughter (Melanie) of M. de Bussière, who had a property near Strassburg and was afterwards taken prisoner, cf. p. 58. Gräfin Edmond Pourtalès is still living at Paris.

[2] Russian Military Attaché in Berlin.

BAR-LE-DUC, *August* 24, 1870

I am writing you a line in great haste as I shall be sure to have something to do later on, and the courier leaves in an hour. We left Commercy to-day at noon, and arrived here between five and six o'clock. It is a pretty town and the inhabitants are accepting the course of events in a very good spirit. We are lodged in a very pretty house, all of us together, with a sentinel at the door. The King is opposite to us, at the Bank of France. I have been in several shops. The people were very amiable. They told me that they were very afraid at first; but that they now saw that they were dealing with people who were civilised, polite, and amiable.

It seems to me that we shall remain here at least to-morrow, although I cannot swear to it. We have received the news that *Châlons has been evacuated by the French and has been occupied by our troops*. But all the same it is possible that we shall remain here for a day or two. In any case it now seems certain that there will be no battle before we reach Paris, otherwise they would not have evacuated Châlons. I can't understand the state of affairs. I still think there will be a serious struggle, although without any particular danger for us, because the Garde Mobile will not do much and we are far superior in numbers and, what is very essential, in artillery also.

At Ligny, half-way between this and Commercy, we met the Crown Prince with his whole suite. I saw Solms.[1] But I repeat I cannot comprehend the Emperor! I really begin to think he wants to shut himself up in Paris, shoot down with his mitrailleuses all who could possibly oppose him, and treat with us at the same time, in order to keep at least a portion of his territories. It is impossible, in my opinion, that he

[1] Graf Eberhard zu Solms, on the Crown Prince's Staff.

can fancy he will be able to continue the struggle with the Garde Mobile. We shall see!

Just as we were leaving this morning, I received three letters from you all at the same time. They gave me great pleasure. But I don't like to see that you are anxious. What about, in Heaven's name? Surely you understand that there is no danger at all where the King is; and as for my health, it is excellent. I assure you that you are upsetting yourself for nothing!

I tried to find out to-day through Tresckow the losses of the Dragoons in men, besides the officers; but nothing is so far known. I will not forget it however. Solms tells me that nothing is known as yet about the names of the French officers killed at Wörth. He only saw the dead body of poor Vogué, with whom he had spent the evening at Mouchy's house a few days before he left. He (Vogué) had thought this war absurd.

Good-bye, Dearest; I thought of you *a great deal* to-day; and far from regretting this date, I hope it will often re-unite us again.

I have asked Solms to protect Petit Val if he arrives there before me. He has promised to do so. . . .

BAR-LE-DUC, *August* 25, 1870
(*Evening*)

Only one line to-day. The courier is leaving at once and I am so dreadfully tired that I feel quite done up. Bismarck conceived the comical idea yesterday evening of making me play the part of Préfet here. To have been Préfet of Bar-le-Duc during one whole day will be a curious recollection for me! It was intended to be for longer; but, as we are leaving to-morrow morning, and as he does not want to leave me behind, my administrative splendours are over. I have been all

day *en route* and on my legs, so that I am really very tired. . . .

This morning I saw Arnim[1] of the Gardes du Corps, who was also charged with a commission.

To-morrow we shall have another trot of six German leagues. If things continue like this we shall soon be before the gates of Paris. But I fear we shall find them shut. It would be very annoying to have to return without having entered the city, and without taking a walk along the boulevards. Well! we must trust in God!

Again good-bye. The courier is getting impatient. Don't be anxious again because of my writing. I am in a terrible hurry and I really do not know how to write any more. . . .

CLERMONT-SUR-MEUSE,
August 27, 1870

No courier: so I could not write to you. We left at 1.30, and arrived here about 7.30. You can form an idea of the distance. Clermont is a small village with twelve hundred inhabitants. One is ankle deep in mud. The whole place is chock full of troops, and there is nothing to eat or drink. Bismarck has put up at the schoolhouse—a poor and miserable place. I could have stopped there, but preferred to trust to my lucky star. I went out with Keudell and found a fairly good room with two beds in a little inn called the Hôtel des Voyageurs. With the help of my amiability and powers of persuasion I managed to procure a dinner for the whole of our party, which was a matter of some importance as our baggage-waggons were not to arrive till some time during the night. Now we are at our everyday work—that is to say we are waiting for orders to know whether we are to remain, or whether we are to start for another place. It is said

[1] Graf von Arnim, Aide-de-Camp to Crown Prince Albert of Saxony.

that we are to stop here till Monday, but one is never certain of anything. I know nothing at all about the military situation, but I think there ought to be an engagement soon. In the interest of the population it is much to be regretted that the French Government has resolved to employ the Gardes Mobiles against us. Yesterday I saw that fifteen hundred of them were taken near Vitry. We met a cart full of them a few leagues from here. They are nothing but peasants in blue blouses who haven't the slightest resemblance to soldiers. We cannot possibly permit this kind of thing, for in this way every peasant whom we meet may be a soldier, and may fire on the troops and then ask to be treated as a prisoner of war. Of course they will not be treated as such; but they will be placed before a council of war and will be judged according to the crimes proved against them. It will be very hard for the poor fellows, but we cannot act otherwise, and the French Government has only to give them a uniform, or, if they haven't got any, to let them remain quietly at home. I saw the Hussars of the Guard pass here yesterday evening. It was almost dark, but little Ratibor[1] recognised me and we had a chat for a few minutes. He is as gay as a lark, and begged me to give you his compliments. Some of the Gardes du Corps are with him. I asked them if Croy was here; but all they could say was, that his squadron was not, and that he was with a convoy; but they did not know in what direction it was.

I have been without any letters from you for two or three days: I miss them very much; it is very annoying. You ought now to have a letter that I wrote you from Bar-le-Duc the evening before last. It was very nice there. There was no lack of provisions then and our quarters were good. It is a great pity we could not

[1] Victor Herzog von Ratibor, Fürst von Corvey, Prinz zu Hohenlohe-Waldenburg-Schillingsfürst, father of the present Herzog von Ratibor. Afterwards General of Cavalry *à la suite* of the army.

remain there. My sole annoyance was my position as Préfet, and I am very glad that that is over. I am quite sure, however, that the people I had to do with will think well of me. The former Préfet, Baron de Metz, came to shake hands with me when we left and expressed a hope that we should meet again under better circumstances. I obtained permission for him to go to Nancy, where his mother is staying. The Mayor, M. Bompar, is also a very good fellow: he too had no reason to complain of me.

I hope, too, that you do not go to the hospitals any more, and that you do not pay too much attention to the French prisoners. You will have seen in the newspapers that people are very much shocked by the preference the ladies are showing for the French, and that this is producing a very bad effect. The same opinion prevails here. It would be very disagreeable for me if you were spoken of in this way.

I had a walk yesterday morning at Bar-le-Duc with Bismarck, who took us to the Lycée. He is interested in everything, so we went in. The boys are no longer there, but the head master and his assistants came, and showed us everything—the dormitory, the refectory, the class-rooms, and the gymnasium. Afterwards they offered us some refreshment, but we only took a glass of *eau sucrée* with a drop of Kirsch. Bismarck chatted with them and told them what had happened, saying that he had not wished for war, and that, so far as he was concerned, he refused to believe in war up to the last moment. He spoke too of the wounded and of their sufferings. You should have seen how their faces, which at first were gloomy, brightened up afterwards. They ended by being quite amiable.

Now, good-bye, Touti. I am writing to you at a schoolboy's desk and seated on a straw chair in a kind of loft. Behind me I can hear the clicking of forks, for a table has been constructed out of boards and tubs,

and it seems that it is to be our dining-table also, and that we are to have something for *déjeuner*. I am very pleased at the idea! But I must tell you that I am very well and that all these details amuse me very much. I think that I was really intended to live a Bohemian life. This doesn't, however, prevent me from feeling that I shall be very pleased to see a big city again and above all to be able to take a bath. I hope you will consider this a long letter—it is a little incoherent; but one must not be too exacting in war time. . . .

CLERMONT, *August* 28, 1870

As I do not know whether we shall have a courier to-day, I am taking advantage of the departure of the King's courier in order to send you a few lines. We remained pretty quiet here yesterday. We dined with the King at a tolerably pretty house with a terrace-garden, from which there is a very fine view. Afterwards Keudell, Abeken and I took a short ride, in order to give the horses a little exercise, for they had done several leagues the day before yesterday. It did me good to breathe a bit. The country is very pretty, and it is a pity that we have not more leisure to see it. After riding some little distance, we came upon one of those little road-labourers' houses that was on fire, probably on account of some act of imprudence. We got back at eight o'clock, and at 8.30 we went to take tea with the King. He is looking very well and cheery.

My uniform amuses him greatly, and he is continually asking me what my military rank is.

We do not yet know how long we shall remain in this frightful hole. It seems to me that it is very probable that something will happen one of these days, but when and where—I don't know at all. Yesterday I read an intercepted letter that was addressed to Gallifet at Metz. It is not signed, but bears the

address of the Jockey Club at Paris, and it is probable that I know the author. It is very interesting. It does not seem as if popular enthusiasm is so very great. There is mention in it of the abdication of the Emperor as if it were something inevitable. We heard also yesterday that poor Paul Bussière[1] was arrested at Colmar and transported to Rastatt. Orders were immediately given to treat him as well as possible. Yesterday I read the *Liberté* of the 23rd, which greatly interested me. Lots of phrases, as usual. It seems true that several people are off to Calais and to other seaports. It is also said in the letter to Gallifet that Prince Metternich[2] has sent some diamonds to London.

I have just been told that our courier starts in two hours, so I can finish my letter in peace. I am sending off the two letters to Kanitz and Ratibor, that I received this evening. What a pity I did not receive Ratibor's the evening before last, as I could then have delivered it to him personally. *Déjeuner* is being served now, and I am very hungry. It is a frugal meal, consisting of a plate of ham, some *caviar à la Taglioni*,[3] some bread and—what is now a great luxury—some butter. It is noon, so I expect you are sitting at *déjeuner* also: I hope it is a better one than ours. However, I assure you that I am very well: but it is so very cold in our office, that my hands are frozen.

GRANDPRÉ, *Monday Evening*
August 29, 1870

I am pretty tired; but I won't go to bed before writing you a line for the courier to take with him. He is starting in a quarter of an hour. We left Clermont at nine o'clock this morning, and stopped for about an hour at Varennes (where King Louis XVI. was arrested

[1] Brother of Gräfin Edmond Pourtalès.

[2] Richard Prinz Metternich, Ambassador for Austria-Hungary in Paris, cf. *supra*, p. 43.

[3] Herr Taglioni, Clerk of the German Legation at Paris before the war.

—I was shown the house as we passed it), and we arrived here about three o'clock. Grandpré is a very pretty village of from 12–1300 inhabitants. We have a very charming house, and are all living together. I have a nice little room on the ground floor with a good bed, which is something to which I attach great importance, as you know. Keudell, Abeken and I have taken a walk in the environs. It is a lovely country: a valley with meadows, and with hills on both sides. In the distance we saw the camp fires of several *corps d'armée* and this reassured us in regard to our night's rest. When we returned, I lay down on my bed, but couldn't sleep because of the flies. We dined at 5.30. Alten[1] dined with us, and we drank an enormous number of bottles of champagne (that we bought and paid for—cash down)! When dinner was over Bismarck, who had been dining with the King, arrived with Waldersee, and we were very merry. The clouds of smoke were such that one couldn't breathe. I have just taken another little walk with Keudell to fill my lungs with some pure air.

At Clermont, where I was staying at the Hôtel des Voyageurs, the landlord did not want to take any payment this morning, he was so pleased at having had Keudell and me at his house. We paid him, however, right royally, and he asked to be allowed the favour of shaking hands with us. Yesterday evening we thought we would like to have some music. Keudell, Herr von Burt[2] and I entered a house where there was a notice that a piano was to be had there. The owner came out upon us, and said: "What, gentlemen, you want to play the piano! That's impossible! We are at supper and our hearts are broken!" I am easily affected, but the mention of a broken heart in conjunction with supper made me laugh! We left him

[1] Major von Alten, Aide-de-Camp to King Wilhelm I.

[2] Captain von Burt, brother of Moltke's wife: one of Moltke's personal Aides-de-Camp.

after assuring him that we had never dreamt of disturbing him.

By the way—it was not Paul de Bussière, but his *father*,[1] who was arrested and taken to Rastatt. I am terribly sorry, and have spoken about it to Bismarck. He had already telegraphed to say that he should be set at liberty, if possible; and that in any case he should be treated with every kind of consideration.

VENDRESSE, *Wednesday Evening*
August 31, 1870

It was absolutely impossible for me to write to you yesterday, firstly, because I hadn't a single free minute, and secondly, because no courier left. I fancy I wrote to you the day before yesterday from Grandpré. At ten o'clock in the evening I went to bed as tired as a dog, hoping to sleep as much as possible. No luck! At eleven o'clock I was awaked, because the Minister wanted me. I dressed myself and went up to his room. He gave me an important piece of work that had to be done quickly, and which occupied me up to three o'clock in the morning.

After that I slept till seven, when I was awaked again. At nine o'clock I was in the saddle. We rode to Busancy, where we waited for the King; then we started off again and took up our position on a height whence we had a splendid view opposite us like a panorama. There was Stonne situated on a mountain; and Beaumont lay at our feet; a cannonade on all sides, and the noise of the mitrailleuse that could be heard almost better than the cannons!

We remained there the whole day, either standing, lying down, or seated on the grass, watching the action with the help of our glasses, our horses being held at

[1] M. de Bussière, father of Gräfin Edmond Pourtalès, who was made prisoner at his country seat La Robertsau, near Strassburg.

some little distance off. The King was seated on a straw chair, and officers kept on riding up from time to time with news. I assure you it was exceedingly interesting. As for the result, you must already know it at Berlin. It was positively a big battle[1] in which the French were totally and disgracefully routed. The Emperor himself was at Stonne, as we now know. When we arrived, our batteries were cannonading Stonne on our left. At the same time, farther to the right, they were attacking the enemy in the direction of Beaumont. The cannonade continued without interruption. The French kept on firing all the time, then they began to give way. They began by disappearing from Stonne, where I had seen some compact masses. Then they retired beyond Beaumont, which commenced to burn. At last we saw them appear on the top of a mountain which was devoid of trees. One could even distinguish the madder-colour of their uniforms. There they again formed themselves in compact masses, awaiting the attack. Our men kept on following. When we saw them appear below the height occupied by the French, we were anxious and impatient because our artillery did not commence firing. All of a sudden the French fired a general discharge of cannon and mitrailleuses. Our men remained firm, without retreating a step. Soon our artillery, which at length joined them, began firing and the French retired anew. Then the firing commenced on our extreme right. The Crown Prince of Saxony had arrived with his troops. Then the firing began on our extreme left. This time it was our Crown Prince who had just arrived. Our troops now formed a semicircle, extending for several leagues, that threatened to close upon the French, and only left them a narrow space for retreat. The firing then got so far off, the French continuing to retreat, that we could no longer see anything. It also began to get

[1] Battle of Beaumont.

dusk. It was then that I left for Busancy, the Minister having charged me to take some despatches there.

The result of the battle is known. We took 40 cannons, 11 mitrailleuses, and more than 6,000 prisoners with a mass of officers. The French army has been thrown back upon the Meuse. It has suffered immense losses, and has probably no course left but to cross the Belgian frontier, where it will be disarmed, unless it tries a final struggle which can only be fatal to it.

The Emperor himself was at Stonne yesterday. Prince Albert[1] occupied his apartment yesterday in some village. I cannot comprehend the conduct of the French army, that army that used to be so much praised! Near Beaumont a whole camp was surprised. There was not even a sentinel! The men and the horses were killed by our artillery, and the officers—more than eighty of them—were quietly sitting in a café at Beaumont, and all of them were taken prisoners!

By the way—Bismarck-Bohlen and I took a man prisoner to-day! We were sitting down quietly at La Besace, waiting for the King, when a soldier came up to us with a chassepot, saying there was a French soldier in a thicket only twenty paces off. We walked there and took him prisoner. He looked as innocent as a new-born babe and pretended that he had been asleep. Very funny, wasn't it?

I have just received your letter with the French newspapers. They are stupid to talk of their victory of the 18th! Conquerors are not forced to abandon the battlefield! However, I hope it will be all finished soon. . . .

HÔTEL DE L'EUROPE, *Brussels*
September 4, 1870

I hope you received my telegram of this morning, and that this journey did not make you anxious. It

[1] Crown Prince Albert of Saxony.

was only connected with a matter that was pressing, and Bismarck wanted me to go myself.

What did you say to the terrible events of these last days?[1] It is all like a dream. If I am not mistaken, I haven't been able to write to you since the 30th, the day of the battle of Beaumont. We went out again on the 31st, and I was nine or ten hours in the saddle, thinking something would happen, but the French retired still further. At last we had the battle of Sedan on the 1st, with the details of which you are now doubtless acquainted. If I am not mistaken, we left Vendresse at five, and at seven o'clock we arrived on a height that commanded the whole position. The cannonade had commenced at 4.30 in the morning. It was terrible. On our side more than 600 cannons. This, with volleys of musketry as thick as hail, and the abominable noise of the mitrailleuses! Several villages were in flames, and in Sedan itself there were some fires. On a plateau beyond Sedan the French fought desperately. Their cavalry (Gallifet's and Murat's regiments) attacked our infantry four times and were decimated like hares. Towards evening a report was spread (by Putbus)[2] that the French prisoners asserted that the Emperor himself was in the town, which we completely discredited, for towards the evening, after a further cannonade against the town, the Bavarian officers announced to the King that an officer with a flag of truce had arrived offering the capitulation of the town. The King replied that a superior officer should come to him to treat. A little while before, a member of our General Staff, Colonel Bronzart,[3] had

[1] Beaumont and Sedan.

[2] Prinz Putbus, Major à la suite of the Army.

[3] Colonel Bronzart von Schellendorf, Chief of section of the General Staff of the Head-quarters Staff. In 1876 he became Major-General, and in 1883 he succeeded General von Kameke as Minister of War. He was Minister of War from 1883 to 1889. The Septennate was carried under him, and the peace footing of the army was increased.

gone as *parlementaire* to demand the surrender of the town. He was admitted into Sedan and conducted to the presence of the Emperor, whom he found greatly offended! The result of the interview was, that the Emperor charged General Reille to take a letter for the King, in which he said, that not having been able to die in the midst of his troops, he handed to him his sword.

It was a solemn moment when General Reille, galloping up the side of the mountain, drew up fifty paces from the King in order to dismount, and then approached bareheaded to deliver the Emperor's letter. The King asked him to wait, and withdrew to consult with Bismarck and Moltke.[1]

[1] The family of Moltke is of Mecklenburg origin: one branch emigrated in the thirteenth century to Sweden; it became extinguished in the male line, but Margarethe von Moltke married in 1414 the Swedish Reichsrat Christian Wasa, thus becoming an ancestress of King Gustav Wasa. The Moltkes also attained to positions of rank and importance in Denmark and Norway. One of Moltke's direct ancestors was an Austrian Field-Marshal General.

Helmuth Graf von Moltke, *b.* 26th October, 1800, at Parchim, in Mecklenburg-Schwerin, the son of Captain von Moltke (in the Prussian service, afterwards a Danish Lieut.-General), became a Danish officer in 1819, but joined the service of the King of Prussia in 1822. In 1835 he took part in the reorganisation of the Turkish army. In 1842 he was appointed A.D.C. to Prince Heinrich of Prussia. In 1855 when Major-General he became 1st A.D.C. to Prince Friedrich Wilhelm (subsequently Kaiser Friedrich III.), and accompanied him to St. Petersburg, Moscow, London, and Paris.

In 1858 he became Chief of the General Staff of the Prussian army, and in 1863 consulted at Frankfort-on-the-Main with the plenipotentiaries concerning the contemplated war with Denmark. In the Danish war of 1864 he was Chief of the General Staff with Prince Friedrich Karl's army. In 1866 he directed the movements of the army as Chief of the General Staff. In 1870–71 he directed the plan of the war against France. In June, 1870, he was made Field-Marshal General, and on October 28th, 1870, received the title of "Graf." In 1888 he resigned his post as Chief of the General Staff of the army. On October 27th, 1890, his 90th birthday was celebrated with great pomp in Berlin. On 24th April, 1891, he died suddenly at his residence in Berlin after just finishing a successful rubber of whist at a family party. Count von Moltke married in 1840 his step-niece, Mary von Burt, who died in 1868 —the step-daughter of his sister. There was no issue from the marriage.

I took advantage of this moment to approach poor Reille and express my sympathy with him. Bismarck then sent for me. Two chairs were placed one on the top of the other, and I was given pen and paper. The King and Bismarck dictated, and we drew up a draft of the answer. Afterwards the King sat down on one of the chairs; Alten held the other as desk; and I held the ink-bottle, and dictated to the King the answer that Reille took with him. The next day, the 2nd September, the Emperor sent to find Bismarck at Donchery, where we had passed the night. He waited, seated on a chair, near a small house that was situated apart from the rest. They conferred together. Afterwards the Emperor was installed in a little Château near Fresnois. His suite and his luggage have arrived, at which he is much pleased, as they (the French) evidently thought they would be detained at Sedan. From noon to three o'clock I remained in the garden, chatting with the Emperor's officers. I went up to them at once and shook hands with them. There were Lauriston, Achille Murat, Massa, Reille, La Moskova, Darillier, Conneau and several others. I offered them my services and my cigarettes. Of course they were very much upset, but they put a good face on the matter. Murat assured me that the Emperor was exposed to the hottest part of the firing, and that it was a miracle that he was not killed. About three o'clock the King arrived, and the Emperor left his room and moved some paces towards him on a kind of verandah, or second room. They shook hands and entered the apartment alone. Then the Crown Prince arrived, and he also went in. At the end of a quarter of an hour the King came out again, much moved, and we all left to ride over the battlefield and to see the troops. You cannot form the very slightest idea of the hurrahs and enthusiasm. Our ride lasted till 11.30, and we got home when it was pitch dark, except for the light

coming from the bivouac fires and the burning villages. The King went to Vendresse and not to Donchery. My poor horse had been saddled from seven o'clock in the morning—that is to say for nearly sixteen hours! On the 2nd, the capitulation of the army was also signed by Wimpffen (the General). After the battle of the 1st, we already had 30,000 prisoners; to these were added 50,000 more who were in Sedan. They are all going to be sent to Germany, with the exception of the officers, who are released on parole not to serve against us. On the battlefield I saw Croy and those whose names I telegraphed to you. I hope you informed those interested at once.

Yesterday morning I left Donchery in a small carriage to drive to Bouillon, and from there here. I joined the convoy of the Emperor, who took the same route, accompanied by an escort of hussars. It was impossible to get on. Columns of troops the whole way. On the other hand I did not want to pass the Emperor. It was only at 2.30 that I arrived at the frontier. I made myself known, and the officer of the Customs conducted me to his house, where I left my uniform and arms. I entered Bouillon in plain clothes. The town was crammed with French officers and was in a state of flutter over the arrival of the Emperor. After great efforts and with the help of gold, I found another carriage which took me to Poix St. Hubert, where I arrived at midnight. With the help of gold too, I persuaded the innkeeper to give me his bedroom, so that I could sleep for some hours. At seven o'clock to-day, I left again by rail; arrived at noon; transacted my business; dined very well with Balan;[1] and to-morrow morning I shall leave again at six o'clock to return to Vendresse, which I hope to reach to-morrow evening. I shall travel with an English officer of the International.

You can't tell how funny it seemed to me to see a civil-

[1] Minister of Foreign Affairs at Brussels.

ised city again and a country at peace. It was really a relief. I took a bath, and had my hair cut—two things that were very necessary.

I shall never forget the journey I took behind the Emperor's suite through the whole of the army. In consequence of the columns, we had some halts of half an hour at a time. Once he passed nearly 2,000 French prisoners, all of them quite cheery. I don't think they saluted the Emperor. This made a very painful impression upon me. He must have suffered martyrdom during this journey!

What a terrible fall! It appears that Jules Favre has already proposed his deposition at the Corps Législatif, and that *nobody* of all those—canailles?—whom he had loaded with favours, protested. Decidedly they are an ungrateful lot; it will do them good to be humiliated.

I met M^me^ Beyens[1] in the street to-day; she is awaiting the course of events. She has had a letter in which it is said that the Empress is calm and resigned, and that she wants to rejoin the Emperor at Cassel. It seems that the Prince Imperial is at Chimay; he will doubtless take the same route. The Emperor is quite done for.

I forgot to say that the newspapers lie when they say that the Emperor was forced to take the road across Belgium. It was he who expressed a desire to be conducted that way. The escort quitted him at the frontier, and only Boyen[2] and Lynar are with him. But he has no wish to go to Paris—poor man—and he has already left again for Aix-la-Chapelle.

Good-bye, Darling; I am very tired, and I must go to bed in order to sleep for some hours at least. I am *very well,* so don't alarm yourself. Be sensible too, if you don't receive any letters for some days. I could not write before again reaching Head-quarters, and must

[1] M^me^ de Beyens, wife of the Belgian Minister at Paris.
[2] General von Boyen, A.D.C. to King Wilhelm.

still wait for the departure of a courier. I hope this terrible war will soon finish and that I shall soon be able to return. . . .

Enclosed is a little flower that I plucked on the hillock where the King stood when he received the Emperor's letter.

REIMS, *September* 7, 1870

I arrived here yesterday about midnight after rather a fatiguing journey, and I am taking advantage of the departure of the first courier to tell you not to be anxious. I am very well, and am not even very tired. I should never have thought I could bear hardships so well. The day before yesterday—Monday, September 5th—I left Brussels at seven o'clock in the morning, and reached Libramont at noon. In the same compartment there were several correspondents of French newspapers, amongst others one of the *Gaulois*. All of them were of opinion that the defence of Paris was an absurdity. Not only do they believe that the Gardes Mobiles and the francs-tireurs will be able to do nothing, but they assured me that the sole guns on the ramparts were of old date—muzzle-loaders. They do not even believe in the enthusiasm of the Parisians; and they say that if things go on much longer like this, the rich and well-to-do people will be pillaged by the working-people. A sad prospect! The wife of Marshal MacMahon was also in the same train: she was going to nurse her husband at Sedan. At Libramont I took the carriage of my English friend, Mr. Armid, to go to Bouillon, where I arrived at four o'clock. There I found my *coucou* and little white horse. I recrossed the frontier after having reclaimed my uniform and arms from the Customs officer. *En route* I kept on meeting French officers and soldiers crossing the frontier, some of them probably fugitives. This went on interminably. I saluted all the officers I passed, who re-

turned my salute. After leaving the first villages, I saw our troops. I again went over a large portion of the battlefield of the 1st, and arrived at Donchery at nine o'clock in the evening, where I found Pless and Putbus. The former told me that he had had a discussion with Bozon Sagan, who is with an ambulance at Sedan. The latter says that we do not observe the Convention of Geneva. We reproach them for the same thing at Donchery.

I also learnt that the Head-quarters Staff are no longer at Vendresse, and that they had left for Rethel, and had perhaps left already for Reims. At six o'clock yesterday morning I tried to get another carriage or at least another horse. The officer in command had a horse brought to me that had just been taken in the fields, which I did not care to have. I left again at eight o'clock with my little white steed. Ten minutes afterwards I discovered that my mantle had been forgotten. I pulled up close to a house standing by itself and my coachman went back on foot to fetch it. There was a poor old woman in the house, all alone in tears. The Bavarians had taken all she had—had pillaged and broken everything! I gave her twenty francs. My coachman returned with my mantle but unfortunately without my plaid. I continued my journey to Poix, where I requested the Maire to get me another horse. At the same moment a well-dressed young Frenchman came up and said to me:—"Monsieur, we are going beyond Rethel—my family and I: will you allow us to offer you a seat in our carriage?" The party consisted of himself, his mother, an aunt, a young person and some children: they had two carriages and a safe-conduct. We started together, and when we met troops or convoys, I caused them to make room for us, so that in reality it was I who rendered them a service. We parted very good friends at three o'clock at Rethel. I hesitated for a moment whether I should

continue this long drive when I learnt that the Headquarters Staff had left the night before for Reims. But my impatience got the better of me. After taking a cup of coffee at the Hôtel (it was impossible to get anything else) I demanded a carriage, and was given a little cabriolet without a hood and with a small horse. No sooner had we got out of Rethel than the horse went lame, and it was impossible to get on. At Tainon I asked the Maire to get me another, which he did at once. He was a very well-bred man and very nice. He asked me to an excellent dinner with General Schmidt and other officers who were lodging at his house. At eight o'clock I left again in pouring rain, my driver being a boy of eighteen. I did not get here yesterday till 11.30 at night, and it took me some time to find Bismarck's house. As everybody was asleep, I went to the Hôtel du Lion d'Or I think, and this morning I was given a room with the others. But I slept well, I assure you. At noon I went to the house where the King is staying and asked Radziwill[1] if his Majesty might wish to see me. He received me at once, and questioned me at length about my journey to Brussels.

When I came in again, I found a letter from Eulenburg[2] telling me that the Crown Prince wanted to see

[1] Anton, Prinz Radziwill, b. 1833, belonged to an old Lithuanian Bojar family, was allied by marriage to the Hohenzollerns, and enjoyed the special favour of Kaiser Wilhelm I., and afterwards of Kaiser Friedrich III. and Kaiser Wilhelm II. His grandfather, Prinz Anton, was known as a composer; his grandmother was Princess Luise von Preussen, sister of Prince Louis Ferdinand, who fell at Saalfeld in 1806. Prinz Anton joined the Artillery of the Prussian Guard in 1852. In 1864 and 1866 he was a Captain of the General Staff of the Guards Corps. In 1866 appointed A.D.C. to King Wilhelm I. It was Prinz Anton Radziwill who had to tell M. Benedetti at Ems that the King had nothing further to communicate to him. In 1885 he became Major-General. In 1888 Kaiser Friedrich made him General of Infantry. Kaiser Wilhelm II. appointed him General of Artillery and gave him the Black Eagle Order. Prinz Anton held large possessions in Russian Poland. Died December 16th, 1904.

[2] Graf August zu Eulenburg, now Lord Chamberlain of the Court of Prussia, and Lieut.-General *à la suite* of the army. In 1870 he was

me at 2.30. I went, and the Prince kept me talking for threequarters of an hour. Afterwards we dined.

The town of Reims is beautiful in parts. The cathedral seems to be grand, and I hope to see it to-morrow and St. Remy also. The King is lodging at the Archbishop's Palace, where he has the Coronation Hall containing the portraits of all the Kings of France. It is very fine. The inhabitants seem to me to be pretty quiet. When the first troops came in, they were fired upon from one house, but this was an isolated act. We shall probably remain here for another two or three days, but nothing is decided as far as I hear. We are comfortable here. There are some shops; and I should not be sorry to remain here some days.

This morning I received three letters from you with some cigarettes. I was right glad to get some news! I haven't had any for some days, and this was very annoying. I should much have liked to be able to write for your birthday, but it was not possible. I too should like to see this abominable war ended; but they are so enraged at Paris that we must give them another good beating to bring them to reason. And when they have had enough, with whom are we to conclude peace? This is the question. In my opinion, there can be no doubt that we must go as far as Paris—perhaps without entering the city. Your father is quite right in my opinion not to go to Paris. It is impossible to foresee what will happen there. It is 1848 over again, with the invasion of the enemy to boot. If he remains quietly at Petit Val, nothing can happen to him. Our troops will arrive there, and they must be lodged and fed. This will annoy Thérèse a good deal—but nothing more. For the rest, you can be sure that when we get there I shall do my best to protect them. As soon as I find out what *corps d'armée*

Master of the Household of Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm (later Kaiser Friedrich III.), and Captain of the Reserve of the 1st Foot Guards. On the outbreak of the war he was rehabilitated as active officer, and appointed the Crown Prince's personal Aide-de-Camp.

is advancing in that direction I shall take energetic steps to see that they don't get annoyed more than is absolutely necessary. But for Heaven's sake, they must avoid doing anything that could look like hostility or as if they were on terms with the enemy. They must not meddle at all in anything. I am a little anxious about your brother Henry. He should either go away or remain perfectly quiet. Of course I would have considered it more sensible if the whole family had gone to Belgium or England, where they could have awaited the issue of events. It is never very pleasant to be between two armies. But there can be no doubt as to the choice between Paris and Petit Val.

Let us hope that all will go off well, and that the war will soon be over. It is all very interesting, but it is lasting a bit too long, and some of the interludes are a little annoying. One has too little liberty. Bismarck works incessantly, and I must be on the spot in case he asks for me. He is not always very amiable when he is out of humour. My colleagues possess all sorts of good qualities, but—we have not much in common. You see there are two sides to the picture. I do not speak of the petty material hardships. That is of no consequence, and one gets accustomed to them.

I am now interrupted. Bismarck has just sent for me.

It did not last long, and I can now continue my letter. I hope you received my telegram from Brussels. I also telegraphed to Pourtalès[1] for Jagow,[2] to Gräfin Goltz and to Trachenberg. Of course you told Mimi that Hermann was well. I don't know whether I told you that he has been a non-commissioned officer for some time. Goltz has promised me to do his utmost

[1] Graf Wilhelm Pourtalès lived as a private gentleman in Berlin. He was the father of the present Prussian Minister at Munich. His brother, Graf Alfred, was Prussian Minister in Paris from 1859–62, and was succeeded there for only a few months by Bismarck.

[2] Son-in-law of Graf Wilhelm Pourtalès.

to get him his commission soon. I saw that Croy was right. It is not particularly pleasant to be always lying in bivouacs without being able to wash or put on clean clothes! I think that everybody will be pleased when it is all over—I shall be the first to rejoice. We have now been five weeks *en route!* I am convinced, however, of one thing—that it has done me an immensity of good. I intend to go on riding; but I shall select horses that are a bit quieter than my good Chestnut. The other evening when we rode round the battlefield, he was rather jumpy. He would have been more so, if we had not been a party of from sixty to eighty in the suite. There were dead horses on all sides, and when we passed by the troops, the shouts of enthusiasm were enough to deafen one. Eight hours in the saddle—from three o'clock to 11.30—without dismounting! But it was very nice all the same.

REIMS, *September* 8, 1870

I have been busy up to this moment, and the courier is now waiting, so that I can only write a few lines to-day to tell you that I am in good health. I slept last night enough for four. I was a bit tired, but am now quite fresh again. We had a very gay dinner with the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, a very nice fellow, and with that excellent creature Sheridan, with whom I exchange silent grips of the hand, for he understands absolutely no word of any other language except English. After dinner we took a walk. We bought some photographs of Reims. I bought a large one that I hope to bring back with me for you. The town is really very pretty with capital shops and all that one wants. But there are a lot of beggars in the streets. Besides these, there are several thousands of workmen out of work. Happily the inhabitants have united to issue a sort of paper currency—*bons* representing cash,

that will be accepted by the tradespeople, so that they can exist.

This morning I paid a visit at the sous-préfecture, and I rummaged amongst the papers and found some very interesting things. The Sous-Préfet was M. Sebastien, and it seems that he only just had time to fly, for everything was in the greatest disorder in his study. For a moment I was afraid that I should again be obliged to play the part of Préfet here, but hope to get out of that. We hope to go for a ride to-morrow morning—the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, his Aide-de-Camp, Bismarck-Bohlen and I—and to go to see the cathedral at St. Remy, which they say is more beautiful than the one here, which, however, is magnificent. It seems that we are really to stop here for some days more, and I am not sorry. I was in a pitiable state, and wanted a number of things. Besides that, I have been able to find for once a good room with a good bed, and that is very nice after having slept on a mattress on the floor or in beds that were of such a suspicious type that I did not dare undress myself!

The weather is disgusting here. This is very annoying, as one wants to see the town and there is not a ghost of a conveyance to be had. I should really like to know when and how this war will terminate. It appears that Paris is veering towards the most complete anarchy. With whom are we to conclude peace? I cannot comprehend anything.

Perhaps we shall spend part of the winter in the environs of Paris. Who knows? If so, and if the country is quiet enough for you to travel without inconvenience, I will send for you and we can await the end quietly. The end must come any day; for to try to defend Paris is an absurdity. They ought not to be obstinate. They ought to make peace so that we can go home.

Did I tell you that we took over 500 cannons at Sedan

and 15,000 horses? Ask Hugo if he still thinks he will win his bet that the war will last six months. I should be quite ready to pay if only he were wrong. To-day I met Seckendorff,[1] who promised that if the Crown Prince's army arrived from the direction of the Marne he would ask him to protect Petit Val. But I will make exact inquiries again, and will then take my measures. Good-bye, Darling. The courier is in a hurry, so I must wind up my letter. I hope to have one from you to-morrow. Your letters arrive very irregularly now; but it is not your fault. It is the fault of the couriers who can scarcely get here.

REIMS, *September* 10, 1870

We are perhaps going to make an excursion presently to Châlons to see the camp there, and I don't know whether I shall be back before the courier leaves, so I will write you a line before starting to tell you that I am well. Yesterday I received your letter of the 3rd. It took six days to reach me! I can picture to myself your amazement when you read about the events at Sedan and the capture of the Emperor. But people are wrong in my opinion to throw all the blame on him. In my eyes he is worth much more than the whole of the crew put together. It is more and more evident to me that they are not worth a fig. I think the way they are abandoning him in his misfortune is disgraceful, after having grovelled before him during the days of his prosperity, and gorged themselves with his kindnesses. Truly they are a bad race, absolutely demoralised.

And the army that they boasted so much about! One of our officers saw with his own eyes at Sedan, on the 2nd September, French *generals* fighting with fisticuffs

[1] Graf Götz von Seckendorff, then 1st Lieutenant in the 1st Prussian Foot Guards, A.D.C. to the Crown Prince. Afterwards Master of the Household of the Empress Frederick. Colonel of the Regiment of the Landwehr of the Guard.

not with other officers, but with the soldiers. You know that we took at Sedan 83,000 men (not including the killed, wounded and prisoners of the 1st), 550 cannons and 10,000 horses. Nothing of the kind has been seen for a long time.

The declaration of M. Jules Favre, Minister of Foreign Affairs, that he will permit us to quit French soil safe and sound if we will pay the cost of the war, has made us laugh heartily here. These people are demented. They can't comprehend yet that the reign of France is over. We shall have to give them another good sound drubbing to drum this into those brains of theirs so disordered by vanity!

Good-bye, Darling. I could not write to you yesterday, because we had no courier. I did not hear till it was too late that a royal postman had gone with letters. Thanks for the cigarettes. I am very pleased that I have not to go without them. . . .

P.S.—I have just written to the Head of the Crown Prince's Staff to beg him to show the greatest consideration possible for Petit Val and its inhabitants. The letter will bear a marginal recommendation from the General Staff of the army and leaves to-day. I am very pleased that it is the Crown Prince's army that is going in that direction.

REIMS, *September* 10, 1870
(9 *p.m.*)

We left this morning at eleven o'clock by carriage and arrived at the Camp at Châlons at two o'clock. We went to see the quarters of the Emperor, which must have been very nice, but are now almost entirely devastated. The inhabitants of Mourmelon pillaged everything after the French troops left. The curtains are torn; the clocks all removed; the mirrors all

smashed. It is doleful. In the dining-room the table was still laid, and the plates were only half empty. They must have fled without giving themselves time to use their finger-glasses. There are thousands of huts and tents that will probably now be taken away by us for our own use. We returned at 5.30. It was a long drive, but I don't regret having gone.

This morning before we left, I went to the General Staff, as I told you. I found that it will certainly be the Crown Prince's army that will pass by Petit Val. I wrote a letter to General Blumenthal,[1] the head of his Staff, to ask him to show every possible consideration. As a courier went this evening to the Crown Prince's General Staff, I seized the opportunity for writing to Seckendorff to ask him to speak about it to the Prince himself. You see that I did all that was possible. There is no doubt that my request will be granted. In order to make it more plausible, I said that I was personally interested in the property of Petit Val. I hope you will now be quite easy about it. If we get close to Paris, I shall of course go to Petit Val myself as soon as possible, to assure myself that all is well and to be able to send you some news about your family.

The courier brought me to-day your two letters of the 4th and the 6th, which gave me much pleasure. What troubles me a bit is, that you read the letter I wrote you from Brussels to the Queen. I don't at

[1] Afterwards Field-Marshal General Graf von Blumenthal. Born July 30th, 1810; died December 22nd, 1900. Entered the army 1827. 1858 personal Aide-de-Camp to Prince Friedrich Karl. 1866 Chief of the General Staff of the 2nd Army under the Crown Prince: he distinguished himself as such, especially at Königgrätz. 1870 again Chief of the General Staff of the Crown Prince's army. Received title of "Graf" in 1883, and in 1888 made Field-Marshal General by Kaiser Friedrich. Bismarck once said of him in France: "The newspapers do not mention him at all, although he is Chief of the Staff of the Crown Prince, and, next to Moltke, has up to this time been of the greatest service in the conduct of the war."

all recollect what I wrote; but it is to be hoped that there will be no gossip about it with Bismarck. I am delighted to hear that my telegrams afforded pleasure to some persons. I also telegraphed to Princess Reuss at Stomdorf, near Hirschberg, in Silesia. I hope she got the telegram.

We don't yet know when we shall leave this place. Probably not for some days. I am beginning to get bored here. There is a good deal to do and scarcely any time to get out. It is rather stuffy after having been in the open air all the time. Did I tell you that Stoffel[1] was taken prisoner at Sedan? He has written to Radziwill to ask to be sent to Frankfurt, but I doubt whether this will be done. He has done so much harm that he will have to bear the consequences. . . .

REIMS, *Sunday, September* 11, 1870

I have just this moment heard that a Cabinet postman is going to start with letters. I have only a moment to write you a few lines.

There is no news and we don't yet know how long we shall be here. I am beginning to be bored by this delay and should like to move on, so that the end might come sooner. Besides, it is abominable to have to stop indoors all day. I see more and more that I was not made to work in a ministerial office. The very smell of an office makes me feel sick. I hope too we shall not stop much longer at Berlin, at all events not under these conditions.

If I can't get a post soon I shall send in my resignation. We will buy a small house somewhere, and will only come to Berlin in the winter. What do you say to that? I am very well still, but not so fresh as when

[1] Before the war he was Military Attaché to the French Embassy at Berlin.

I was able to ride a good deal and was in the fresh air. I hope you are quite well, and that you are prudent. You don't say anything about your condition. I hope you occupy yourself a good deal with your household and the children; and that they are learning something, especially Nelly, and that I shall find them very good. Do you often go to the Queen? It seems to me from the words you use, that you go there whenever you like. Is it so? I laughed heartily over your anger about Pourtalès. He was probably in the blues, and in that case he would forget to speak to the Queen. Do you see Elisabeth[1] sometimes? I will try to find out where her husband is. . . .

REIMS, *September* 12, 1870

I have just arrived from Châlons, where I went this morning with Bismarck-Bohlen to inspect the préfecture and the prisons, and I hear that the courier is leaving in ten minutes, so that I can send you a line. It was in every way a very pleasant excursion, and I am very pleased that I have been there. We left at 5.30 this morning by rail—the line being in working order again up to four miles from Châlons. At this point the French have burnt two bridges, which are about to be repaired. We obtained a spring-cart with a mule, and did the distance in twenty minutes.

We alighted at the best Hôtel, which has a curious name—Hôtel de la haute Mère Dieu! After we had finished our necessary business at the préfecture and had visited the prison, which is admirably kept (nuns look after the female prisoners), we took a nap till four o'clock, after which we had an excellent dinner, the mênu of which I drew up. Then we left in a very good carriage to rejoin our train. *En route* we had a

[1] Prinzessin Carolath-Beuthen, née Comtesse von Hatzfeldt.

chat with the engineer who is restoring the permanent way, a charming man who has lived in France for a long time and remained at Paris until the 14th August, because they would not allow him to leave. At last he found an opportunity of getting off *viâ* London. We returned here about nine o'clock, and here I am.

The courier will be here any moment, so I must hurry. It was impossible for me to write more than a line yesterday, but I think you are glad to get even a line telling you that I am well. I write as regularly as possible, you must admit. I don't think I have let one single courier leave so far without something.

What a funny idea, that I should come to Berlin! It is absurd. If there had been a possibility of coming for a day to see you and the children, I should certainly have done it. But how should I rejoin the Head-quarters Staff afterwards? Bismarck gave me two days for my journey to Brussels, and I was obliged to take four more. I remained from noon of the fourth day till six o'clock the next day at Brussels (from the 4th to the 5th) and the rest of the time I was in a carriage. Besides that, I also got over some good distances, the last day from Donchery near Sedan to this place from 8 a.m. till midnight!

The courier has just come, so I must leave you. It is impossible to fill up the fourth page. I have something to do afterwards, and Bismarck does not like waiting.

I am delighted that your sister-in-law has got over her confinement safely, but I am sorry that she and your mother are in Paris. Why not at Petit Val? I am certain that there was no danger there, whereas one can never trust the populace of Paris. However, let us hope all will be well. When we are in the neighbourhood, I will go myself to see what is going on at Petit Val, and I will let you know. It won't be long perhaps before we get there. . . .

REIMS, *September* 13, 1870

Only one line to-day to tell you that I am well. The courier is off in a moment, and it was impossible for me to write sooner. We dined with the King, and from that moment I have not had a minute to myself. It is not very pleasant not to have a free moment. I have seen nothing of the town; I have barely seen the cathedral—and that only for a few minutes. Well, after all, it is a business that will not last for ever. One is not even entitled to complain, for everybody is working like a nigger, the Minister at the head of us all. All this is of no consequence, provided the end be attained, and that this miserable war be finished soon. We shall probably leave to-morrow to do a distance of seven or eight leagues. I shan't be sorry to get away, as the stay here was beginning to bore me horribly. Besides that, I think that if we advance, things will get on quicker.

I am very curious to know at which side of Paris we shall arrive. I hope it won't be far from Petit Val, so that I can go there. Do you remember my saying before my departure that I only had one wish, and that was to go to Petit Val in uniform? I really believe now that the wish is about to be realised! As soon as possible, I shall ask for a little holiday. I will have the Chestnut saddled and will go and surprise the inhabitants of Petit Val. Of course, if I can put this plan into execution, I will give you all the news at once.

No letters from you to-day. This is very disagreeable, for I shan't get any to-morrow either, if we are *en route*. By the way, Nostitz tells me that Carolath[1] is at Ligny and that Elisabeth ought to know this, as she has written several times to him. I don't understand why you ask me for news about d'Abzac. I told you

[1] Prinz Carolath-Beuthen, husband of Prinzessin Carolath-Beuthen, *née* Comtesse Elizabeth von Hatzfeldt (cf. *supra*, p. 77).

some time ago that he was well. Gallifet must be at Metz. I told you that Stoffel was taken at Sedan.

Good-bye, my Darling; I must leave you, as I have to go up to Bismarck. I have to be always doing this. After all it is very interesting. . . .

MEAUX, *September* 16, 1870

There was no courier either yesterday or the day before; and there was no means of writing. Abeken has just woke me to tell me that a Cabinet postman is off in ten minutes. I am sitting up in my bed, having just seized a scrap of paper to write you these few lines that you may know at least that I am quite well.

Yesterday morning we left Château Thierry, where we passed the night in a very pretty house. The country is charming. We have got pretty good quarters here. We cannot be far from Petit Val, but it isn't possible to go there yet, as the roads of communication are not yet sufficiently safe. I shall go there as soon as it is possible.

I will write a longer letter if there is a courier this evening.

MEAUX, *September* 16, 1870

I received your two letters of the 11th and 12th after having hurriedly written you a line. They would have given me great pleasure if I had not read in them that you were sad. Why? I don't know. Tresckow asked me just now how you were, and I replied that you were very well but that you thought the war was lasting a long time. "What!" said he, "lasting a long time! Who could have supposed it would pass over so very quickly!" He is really quite correct, and you are wrong to get impatient. I too should be very glad if it were finished, I assure you, and if I



Count Paul Hatzfeldt
as German Ambassador in Constantinople
1878 - 1881

could, I would go to rejoin you; but I must confess that I hope to see you sooner than I could have thought possible when I left you. You must really not complain; but be a little patient. . . .

I thought that when I got here I should soon be able to trot over to Petit Val, but Tresckow has just told me that it is still too soon. It is rather far from here, and one does not know whether all the roads are occupied. I should run the risk of falling amongst some bands of franc-tireurs; and it is probable that I should find most of the bridges destroyed, as there would not have been time to rebuild them. It will therefore be necessary to defer the expedition for some days.

The road here from Château Thierry interested me very much yesterday. It is a charming country. At Château Thierry we put up at a very pretty house, and I should have liked to remain there a bit. The whole way we were guarded famously by sentinels posted on both sides of the route. There was not a soul in the villages. Whole colonies were found in the woods, and efforts are being made to calm the people and to induce them to return to their homes. Two leagues from here two magnificent bridges had been destroyed —a railway bridge and one belonging to the high-road. This means throwing a lot of money into the river!

The engineers constructed another bridge in three or four hours, and we drove across it with the greatest ease with all our heavy carriages. I hope to ascend the tower of the cathedral to-morrow. It is said that one can see Paris from there. I am very curious as to how the Parisians will behave themselves there. I should not be much surprised if they surrendered soon. I am sure there are plenty of people in Paris who would be very pleased if they did, so that they could get rid of the present Government.

Have you read Victor Hugo's proclamation to the German people? It is the most stupid thing I have

read for a long time. Phrases and naught but phrases! He forgets that he is not speaking to Frenchmen, who allow themselves to be impressed by sonorous sentences. Well, *qui vivra verra!*

MEAUX, *September* 17, 1870

I received your letter of the 13th this morning and take advantage of the fact that a postman is leaving in a few minutes, in order to write you a hurried note and to tell you that I am exceedingly well. Your letter gave me great pleasure because I fancy you are in better spirits. . . . The weather is very fine here now, but I fear it won't last long. It does not affect me much though, as I get very little good out of it. I went for a ride yesterday with Bismarck-Bohlen between three and four o'clock in the afternoon, and when we got back Bismarck was very annoyed that we had been out!

I haven't yet been able to set foot out of doors today. It is now past two o'clock, and we dine with the King at four and after that we have to return to our apartments. You can understand that we are always very pleased to get away because we then have some good exercise in the open air.

I have no idea how long we shall remain here, but I don't think it will be for long, and I shan't be sorry when we leave. We ought to try to take St. Cloud, so that we could be put up there whilst awaiting the issue of events at Paris. It seems to me that they ought soon to come to a decision. Don't get nervous about the mines and other nonsense with which we are threatened. We shall not be such fools as to enter the city before everything has been properly arranged and carefully inspected. As for the bridges that they are giving themselves the trouble to have blown up, that does not interfere with us much, and it will cost

them a lot of money to repair them later on. I shall be very pleased when peace is made. . . . We have much more to do here than at Berlin and no amusements of any kind.

I hope I shall be able to ask the officers of the General Staff to-day if it is possible to go to Petit Val. If it is, and if all the bridges are repaired, and if I don't run any risk of falling into an ambuscade, I shall ask Bismarck to give me a day's holiday to go there. I want to go very particularly for your sake, in order to be able to give you some news about the people there, for I am convinced that they are well, and that not a single tree in the park has been touched.

Good-bye, Darling. I must close this letter as the postman is waiting for it.

Bismarck has just gone out, so I shall go and get a whiff of fresh air before dressing for dinner.

MEAUX, *September* 18, 1870
(3 *p.m.*)

The courier leaves at four o'clock, so I will take advantage of this to write to you. I inquired yesterday of "General Staff" (as the *Figaro* puts it)—in other words of the General Staff about my excursion to Petit Val, and I was advised to wait two or three days. They will tell me as soon as it is possible to go there. It is rather far from here, as you can see if you look at the map! It is probable I should not be able to go there and back in a day. You may be quite sure that I shall go as soon as it is possible to do so without imprudence, so as to be able to send you the news you are awaiting with impatience. You need not be anxious. I am quite convinced that the Crown Prince has given the necessary orders, and that everything is as it should be. If anything has been touched, I shall kick up a fine row.

I went to church this morning to hear high mass. What do you say to that? I met Radziwill and some other officers there. The cathedral is very beautiful, but not finished. There is a good statue of Bossuet there. The Bishop took part in the mass. He is almost blind: his name, I think, is Monsignor Allon. The officers who are putting up at his palace say that he is an amiable man, but that he has already tried to convert them to catholicism!

I saw Asseburg[1] yesterday (tell Elizabeth this). The Gardes du Corps are well. I sent my compliments to Croy and Reuss.

This morning 'my soldier' Dachröder was decorated with the iron cross at luncheon! He looks well and is in good health. Tell this to Frau von Prillwitz[2] with my compliments.

I hoped that we were going to take up our quarters at Ferrières. I should have been greatly delighted if we had done so, but unfortunately we can't. It is not certain that there would be enough rooms, and above all that there would be sufficient stabling for the horses. It is really a great pity. Meaux isn't at all amusing. Tell me—were we not there one day in the big barouche-and-four? Oh! for the fine times when we had four horses! Or do I make a mistake? Wasn't it the day that we went to M^me^ de Béttisy?

Yesterday there was a sort of slight outpost engagement between the cavalry and the Gardes Mobiles. One of the latter—a bootmaker—fired without hitting anybody and afterwards could not find time to reload his rifle; his friend, a tailor, trembled all over. They were all taken. It is absurd to make these poor wretches play at soldiers. We shall now see how

[1] Lieutenant in the Gardes du Corps.

[2] *Née* Comtesse von Moltke, sister of Gräfin Perponcher and Frau von Danckelmann—all three well-known beauties of the Prussian Court at that time.

Paris is provisioned. At present it is impossible to get anything whatever into the town. Let us hope that they will end by seeing that resistance is absurd, and that they had better surrender. According to the newspapers, our friend Richard[1] must be there, for they say that he has orders to keep up semi-official relations with this sweet little Provisional Government. . . .

MEAUX, *September* 19, 1870

I have just been told that a Cabinet postman is to leave in half an hour, so I will write you a few lines, especially as I am not sure that we shall send off a courier to-day.

I received your letter of the 15th yesterday an hour after I sent off mine to you. It reached me very quickly. You can understand that I was very pleased to get such fresh news. But I was not at all pleased to find that your parents had remained in Paris despite all that I had told you. It would have been much better to have stopped at Petit Val. As things are, I shall not go there now until I can do so without encountering any difficulties. Yesterday evening I saw an officer who was at Sucy between six and eight o'clock. He told me there were no troops there yet. I shall certainly go there myself in two or three days. After dinner yesterday I was told that Croy had asked after me, and that he had gone to dine at the Hôtel. I found him there with Corvin of the Gardes du Corps, both of them dining, and drinking Champagne. Croy looks very well, but he says he is bored. They had their sporting guns with them and cartridges and thought of going out shooting to-day. That is a pleasure I hope to have one of these days.

There has been no fighting so far, except some un-

[1] Prinz Metternich, cp. *supra*, p. 42.

important encounters between the outposts. Paris must be packed with National Guards and Gardes Mobiles.

Your father is quite right when he talks of the ingratitude of the French nation towards the Emperor. The best part of it is, that after having forced this war upon him against his will, they now assert that it was only a war between him and us, and that consequently, now that the Republic has been proclaimed, we have nothing to do but be off. It is impossible to know what to be more astounded at—their naïveté or their impudence!

Your Minister, Mr. Washburne,[1] is playing a curious part there. Instead of protecting your compatriots when necessary, as was his duty, he holds forth to the populace. It is to be hoped that America, with whom we have always been on the best of terms, will not approve of this. . . .

FERRIÈRES EN BRIE, *September* 20, 1870

Only two lines to tell you that I am well. If we have a courier this evening, I shall write you a longer letter. This one is to go with the Cabinet postman, who is off in a few moments.

It is like a dream to be at Ferrières. Yesterday and to-day I had some very interesting experiences. I hope to be able to tell you all about that in my next letter. We left Meaux yesterday at noon on horseback, but we did not get here till about 7 or 8 in the evening, as we had to halt rather a long time *en route*.

I had an opportunity of sending a pencil note to your mother at Paris. I told her that you and the children were well, and that I had had news from you dated the 15th.

I took a walk in the park this morning and showed

[1] American Minister at Paris.

the conservatories to Keudell and Abeken. It is all very beautiful. I do not yet know how long we shall remain here, but I have a vague idea that it will not be for long. . . .

FERRIÈRES, *September* 21, 1870
(2 *p.m.*, *Wednesday*)

This morning I received your two letters of Thursday and Friday (without any date, which annoys me a good deal), and I am glad to hear that you are well and in good spirits. I was only able to write you a line yesterday, and to-day I am again in a great hurry, because Bismarck-Bohlen is waiting for me to make an excursion with him to Lagny to try to find some wine, as we shall soon be completely out of it.

The King has prohibited all requisitions here, and won't allow anybody to go out shooting here either. Of course Rothschild's butler won't sell us any wine, and the result is that, although there is a cellar chock full before our very eyes, we have nothing to drink! It is all very fine to be considerate, and I am the last to take anything whatever, but I think this is a bit exaggerated, especially as people will not thereby be prevented from declaring after we have gone away that we pocketed all the silver spoons and forks.

I am quite happy here: the air agrees with me and I'm glad to see the trees and flowers. If it were not for the cannon shots from time to time, one could really believe one was in the country. The day before yesterday there was a tolerably serious engagement. We were attacked by troops of Vinoy's corps. We beat them and drove them in the direction of Paris after capturing seven of their guns and taking 200 prisoners. Our officers say that the French infantry

are not fighting as well as they did at the beginning of the war. It is evident that they are demoralised.

The day before yesterday, as we were riding from Meaux, a carriage containing Jules Favre with M. de Ring and a third person, a little Jew, whose name I don't know, crossed our path. I galloped after them for about a league, when I overtook them. I brought them back and went to fetch Bismarck. The meeting took place at Montry, where there was a conference. (Whilst this was going on my revolver, which was in my saddle-holster, was stolen.) We went off again afterwards, and Jules Favre followed us and passed the night at the village. Yesterday, in the course of the day, he returned to Paris and Ring[1] took my note with him for your mother. I think we shall see them again to-morrow, but it is impossible to tell you whether there is any chance of anything coming of it.

M. Jules Favre did not make much of an impression on me. When I went up to his carriage to speak to him, he took off his hat and held it in his hand whilst he spoke to me, and the others acted similarly. They maintained this attitude the whole time.

I have no confidence at all in this Government. I don't think the Republic can last long. At Versailles the people were so pleased to have some protection against the democracy that they gave the Crown Prince a kind of formal reception. It is exactly the same in other towns. Well! we shall see in a few days what will be the upshot of all this.

I see from your letter that you would much like to be set at ease about Petit Val. As the "Holy Family" is not there, I had almost given up the idea of going there; but I will go to-morrow or the day after, in order to be able to tell you what condition everything is in. I hope that nothing has happened. But the "Holy Family" did its best to expose it to pillage, by

[1] M. de Ring, a Frenchman who came to Ferrières with M. Jules Favre.

leaving nobody in the house to look after it. I am really very much annoyed that they did not stop at Petit Val, as I had so strongly advised them to do.

Good-bye, my Darling. Bismarck-Bohlen has already been here three times to see if I am ready, so that I cannot keep him waiting any longer. Take care of yourself, and write to me as often as possible. . . .

FERRIÈRES, *September* 22, 1870
(10 *a.m.*)

I have just received Thiele's[1] telegram, and immediately asked Bismarck's permission. I am off in five minutes to Petit Val, with letters of recommendation from the General Staff. Whilst they are saddling the horses, I am writing to tell you that I am well and that I am just starting.

I hope to be able to give you good news to-morrow. Don't be uneasy. You may be sure that I shall not neglect anything. Good-bye, my Darling. Courage! . . .

Telegram.

FERRIÈRES, *September* 22, 1870

For Gräfin Hatzfeldt.

Henry well. Petit Val in a satisfactory condition.

HATZFELDT.

FERRIÈRES, *September* 23, 1870
(10 *a.m.*)

You must have received my telegram through the Foreign Office, and must have been reassured as to Henry's fate. I will now give you an account of my excursion to Petit Val.

I left here about noon on my faithful Chestnut

[1] Chief of the General Staff of the 2nd Army Corps.

followed by Littmann,[1] after having obtained my pass from the General Staff. I took the road to Boissy and Pontault La Queue (almost deserted villages now), and arrived with a column of troops at two o'clock at the village of Sucy. The same lugubrious aspect! Scarcely anybody there; houses deserted and closed; some of the doors burst in! I rode down the road that leads to the summer-house. The backyard gate was opened for me, and I crossed the yard. I learnt that Henry was safe and sound. When I reached the Château, the first person I met was the chef, and Henry came up afterwards, well pleased to see me. The letter was quite cheery and in good spirits. His greatest trouble is that his family are in Paris.

Lots of troops have passed through the place; some wine has been taken, and the cows also—which will be a greater annoyance to your mother; otherwise, nothing has been touched, and the house and garden wear their usual aspect. The only inconvenience is, that if things continue as they are, there will soon be nothing more to eat. Whilst I was with Henry in the dining-room, where I was given a wing of a chicken and an egg (no coffee, because they hadn't any sugar), an officer arrived who was looking for a lodging. I asked for whom he wanted it, and discovered that it was for my friend General Thiele and the whole of his staff. I was very glad to be of use, and sent word to him to say that he and his officers should be put up as well as possible. He has got Metternich's room (Henry is in your mother's room); his Aides-de-Camp are upstairs, and his office is in the old billiard-room. There are four officers in the summer-house, but there is scarcely any furniture there, as it is all at the Château, so beds will have to be sent to them.

As I was walking through the Château, I found three officers of the Bureau on the point of making

[1] Graf Hatzfeldt's servant during the campaign.

themselves at home in your little room that you had before you were married. I made them move out, and put them into the apartments next to the old billiard-room. It was not very easy to find room for everybody. I put the whole place under Thiele's protection. In case he should have to go away, I left a line in my hand-writing with Henry to ask the officers who should come there to see that no damage was done to the property. Henry is sure to go out shooting to-day with one of the officers to get some game for the table. He knows how to make himself understood in German, so all will be well.

They are all to dine together at six o'clock. At 5.30, seeing that everything was in order, I left, so as to get back before dark. As I passed through the backyard I went up to see Belmance, who broke his leg whilst trying to jump over a wall out of fright at seeing the first troops pass by. He was charmed with my visit and will soon be all right again.

When I got to the village, I stopped near the Church in order to see the Curé, who opened the gate himself for me. He is quite alone: his sister has fled to Paris. He looks and feels very well; was very glad to see me, and sends you all sorts of messages. Then I went up the village and called on the Ginoux.[1] The Château is completely abandoned: no porter, no gardener, and everything topsy-turvy. The troops that come that way put up there and then take their departure leaving all the doors open. In the dining-room the table is covered with bottles, glasses and plates.

It is only in M. Philippe's study that any real damage has been done. The writing-table has been opened and all the papers have been scattered about. Unfortunately nothing can be done, because nobody is there to look after things, and different troops come every day. When I left there I took the road to

[1] Neighbours of Petit Val. They owned the Château de Sucy.

Noiseau, from there to La Queue and then the same road that I started on and arrived here at 7.15. If I can get a few free hours, I will go back to Petit Val one of these days. So don't be anxious.

I have just received three letters from you all at the same time with Nelly's little note, which gave me great pleasure. I should like to share your confidence that peace will soon be concluded; but I don't see any chance of it yet. Good-bye, my Darling. The Minister has just sent for me. . . .

FERRIÈRES, *September* 24, 1870
(*noon*)

I don't know whether I told you yesterday that Raymond[1] and his wife are at Etretat. Henry told me so. So I don't understand at all why your mother went to Paris and forced your father to go there too. If they did not want to remain at Petit Val, which would have been their simplest plan, it would have been better to go to England or Switzerland to await the end of the war.

You will have already seen from the newspapers that the negotiations with Jules Favre did not come to anything, as I foresaw. He did not return, consequently I did not receive any answer to my letter to your mother, and I have no means of sending her another. I am very sorry for it, for I should have liked very much to set you at ease about them. Henry is disconsolate at their being shut up in Paris, and he would much like to make them come away. But for the moment there is no way of doing so. If any fresh negotiations take place, I will do my utmost to get them out, if they on their side will consent.

Nothing new has happened except the surrender of Toul. This is very favourable because of the railway

[1] Mr. Raymond Moulton, brother of Gräfin Hatzfeldt.

and because we shall have 45,000 more men at our disposal who had been kept down there.

We live very quietly here, and this sort of life has begun to be very monotonous. Yesterday I spent the evening with the King, who was very amiable and in good spirits, as always. He had dined at Lagny with Prince Karl and that had made him a little tired. . . .

The Berlin gossip about me that you tell me has amused me very much. You need not warn me not to entertain any illusions. I have got over that long ago. I am thoroughly persuaded that a good many pleasant phrases will be used, but nothing at all will be done for me. But I have decided to send in my resignation in six months at latest, as soon as I shall have got the little cottage we were talking about. I have got a few more years of youth before me which I want to spend somewhere else than in the offices of the Wilhelmstrasse. I want to travel, to live in the country, to give some attention to our small fortune, to shoot, and live after my own fashion. Of course I should renounce all this if I were given a post worth having. If they don't give me one, I will not. . . .

I shall be heartily pleased the day I can tell you that the war is over and that I can return soon. But we have not got so far as that yet; and I am afraid that if we want to take a trip somewhere together, we shall have to go to Italy in search of warmth. . . .

FERRIÈRES, *September* 25, 1870
(1 *p.m.*, *Sunday*)

I received your letter of the 20th last night. How is it possible that you have been without letters for seven days? I have written every day we had a courier, and only missed at most the two or three days between Reims and Meaux. I am very sorry for it, but you see it was not my fault. I must

say that as a general rule I have not let one opportunity pass without sending you news. You ought to receive letters written every day except the two days when I was *en route* from Brussels to Reims and afterwards the two days between Reims and Meaux.

This morning I got up punctually at seven o'clock, and at 7.30 I was on horseback for a ride in the park, which is certainly very beautiful. The weather is lovely, a real treat; and I rejoice at having nothing to do to-day so as to be able to spend the whole time out of doors, for yesterday I wasn't able to set foot outside before 7 p.m. At 9 p.m. we took tea with the King. I was seated opposite him, when a footman came and whispered in my ear that Bismarck desired to see me. Great embarrassment! Pückler[1] having told me I might leave the table, I did so. The King inquired what was the matter and permitted me to go. Bismarck had nothing of particular importance to tell me, and I suspect that he only wanted to show that he had the right to send for his employés even when they were with the King. I returned afterwards, and I think that the King was not vexed on account of my absence. It is very amiable on his part. I was at work to-day from the moment I returned from my ride; I haven't yet had time to shave myself, and I expect I shall have to remain in this condition till dinner-time. There is no news except the surrender of Toul; this is important because of the railway. There has been no fresh engagement before Paris, at least nothing is known here of one. But still for all that we often hear the sound of cannon. It seems that captive balloons are often seen over Paris, which are used for observing the movements of our troops. Whenever the garrison see a patrol or a few men, they fire at them with their big guns. This makes a lot of noise, but does no great harm. But this waiting is tedious,

[1] Court Marshal of His Majesty King Wilhelm I.

especially for us who have a good deal to do when things are quiet for a bit.

I should be exceedingly pleased if I could now hear of the surrender of Metz. We should then have another 150,000 men available before Paris, and the defeat of the last regular army in France would certainly have a great moral effect on the population of Paris. What is said about the existence of disease in our camp before Metz is an invention. I saw a Russian officer last night who came from there: he assured me that the state of health of the troops was much better than one would have expected.

I have received a letter from Franziska: she wants to get MacMahon and d'Abzac to come to her house. That is just like her! I will talk about it to Tresckow, but I doubt whether they will care to provide her with two such beaux. People are tolerably annoyed here that the French officers who are prisoners in Germany have been allowed to move about in Germany wherever they liked. It must be admitted that this is not very reasonable, and I should not be surprised if the permission were revoked. . . .

I hope to go to Petit Val again to-morrow or Tuesday. Did you receive my telegram? What bad news had you received when you telegraphed to me?

FERRIÈRES, *September* 26, 1870
(2 *p.m.*)

I have only a minute for writing a line to you in haste. Your letter of the 22nd reached me yesterday evening, so it came very quickly. I should much like to accede to your request about coming here, but unfortunately it is not possible to do so. You could not put up at the Head-quarters. It would not be allowed. There is no room for you and I should not know how to feed you. As for letting you go to

Petit Val, you must not dream of such a thing. It is impossible to foretell whether there will not be an engagement one of these days in that direction; and even if that were not to happen, I would not leave you alone in the midst of this confusion. I could not be there with you, and I should not have a moment's rest here if I knew you were there alone.

So you see, little Darling, you must be patient and await events, as I have to. Just now I saw a letter from Paris that contained some news about some of our acquaintances. St. Priest is the orderly officer of a general whose name I could not make out. The Bosons, Ganays and others are in Paris. I will speak to Tresckow: I asked him to give something which would serve as a recommendation for Henry which he can show our troops. He has just let me know that this can be done. If I get this paper, I will go to Petit Val early to-morrow morning to give it to Henry, and to see how he is and to give him some cigars.

Good-bye, Darling, I am quite well, and hope to be able to write to you at greater length this evening or to-morrow morning. I am interrupted every moment. Lehndorff has just left, and begs me to send you his compliments . . .

FERRIÈRES, *September 27*, 1870

I have a big piece of work to do, and can only devote two minutes to you, as the courier is leaving soon. This morning I received your letter of the 23rd. Don't leave Berlin under any pretext unless I tell you to do so. I rely absolutely on this. It is impossible for me to let you come here just yet. You should believe me when I tell you so, as you know how glad I would be to see you. It would be impossible for me to keep you here for a day, and I positively do not wish you to go to Petit Val now. It is much too near the outposts.

You would be of no use at all; and I should be most anxious the whole time. I rely upon your implicit obedience in this matter. As soon as it is possible, I will send for you myself, but until I do so, you must not move. You would put me in a most embarrassing position, and would cause me much annoyance.

As soon as there is some means of communicating with Paris, which is impossible just now, I will suggest to your mother that she should leave the city. Meanwhile I have obtained an order from the King to the Commandant of the Third Army not to do any damage to Petit Val. I shall go myself with the order when I have finished my work. I shall doubtless drive with Henry and shall perhaps pass the night there. Don't be anxious, and be sure that I shall do all that it is possible to do.

I do not advise you to write to Paris just now. The letter would never arrive; and if it did arrive, it might cause them some annoyance. Send me a letter, and I will have it delivered as soon as there is an opportunity for sending it. Good-bye, Darling, I rely upon your doing nothing without my permission.

I hope I shall be able to write to you at greater length to-morrow.

FERRIÈRES, *September* 27, 1870
(11 *p.m.*)

As I shall be leaving to-morrow morning at six o'clock for Petit Val, and as I shall doubtless not be able to get back for the courier at two o'clock, I will write you a few lines before going to bed so that you shall not be without a letter. I have been busy all day, and am really a bit tired now of writing, and especially of being shut up so long. At four o'clock we dined

(Anton Radziwill was with us), and not only did we eat a good deal but we drank a pretty good quantity of wine too. This would not matter at all if we could have some exercise, but I don't think it is very good for one's health when one goes out very little. After dinner I took advantage of the arrival of General Burnside[1] (your compatriot) in order to make myself scarce, and to take a good turn in the park. Unfortunately it is dark at seven o'clock and rather cold, so that it is not possible to remain long out of doors. I came in again to finish up some things (amongst others something in the interest of poor Bussière at Rastatt) so as to be able to leave to-morrow with a good conscience.

Just now whilst we were drinking a cup of bad tea, a messenger came to tell us that Strassburg had capitulated. It is a good piece of news which I rejoice to hear both for our sake and for the poor inhabitants, who suffered horribly during the siege of the city. We don't know any details yet, but I suppose the garrison are prisoners of war. After having destroyed a part of the town, we shall have to reconstruct it, as we shall doubtless keep it.

The King spoke to me yesterday about Petit Val, adding that he willingly acceded to my desire to have it protected as much as possible. He is really most good and amiable. He made a good long excursion to-day in the direction of Champigny (on this side of the Marne) and he thought of perhaps going as far as Sucy. I was greatly distressed that I could not go with him, for I should have liked to show him Petit Val; but I now hear that he was not able to go there.

[1] Ambrose Everett Burnside, b. 1824, had a military and commercial career in America. He was at Versailles in 1870–71, and repeatedly tried to mediate between the belligerents, but in vain. Afterwards elected a member of the United States Senate. Died 1881.

Have you got M. J. Favre's report of his interviews with Bismarck? I am the aide-de-camp he speaks of, who came to fetch him. I laughed heartily on seeing myself thus described.

Who knows whether the news of the capitulation of Strassburg, that they will soon hear of, won't make them reflect at Paris and induce them to recommence negotiations? If so, I will try to get a letter delivered to your mother to ask them if they would not like to get out of Paris. If they decide to leave, I hope that I shall be able to manage it one way or another.

In any case you may be sure that I shall do my utmost. So don't be anxious; and above all, don't leave Berlin. I don't wish you to come *under any pretext whatever.* The roads are not at all safe, and the means of transport cannot be found for persons who have no military rank. You could neither remain here nor at Petit Val. Just imagine how embarrassing my situation would be!

Croy came here yesterday for an hour. He is in good health, but is awfully bored. He saw Hermann a few days ago; he was looking very well. Tell Mimi this. Have you seen that Richard[1] is at Tours? He must be feeling horribly out of his element and bored to death. Hoyos[2] is with him and I am told that Hübner[3] remained in Paris. I am assured that a number of the Paris Garde Mobile have deserted. It is to be hoped that this will go on, and that the whole business will finish all the quicker. Poor Paris! in what state shall we see her when we enter the city?

Your ponies are in Paris. . . .

[1] Prinz Metternich, cf. *supra.*
[2] Secretary of the Embassy of Austria-Hungary in Paris.
[3] Secretary of the Embassy of Austria-Hungary in Paris.

FERRIÈRES, *September* 29, 1870
(*noon*)

The courier is leaving in a moment, much earlier than usual. As I am not sure whether there will be a postman later, I will write a line at least. I was at Petit Val yesterday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., but I did not see Henry, who had gone to Versailles with one of Thiele's officers to make some purchases and was not expected back till late in the evening. He is on the best of terms with the officers. He goes out shooting with them, and all is in the best of order. Thiele's cook and the cook of the house work together and they live very well.

I had luncheon with them and their food is much better than ours. Thiele gave me a horse afterwards and we went to Piple and from there to Gros Bois, where I found amongst others the Prince of Wied, who requested me to give you his compliments.

I visited the Château and did not recognise it again. It is splendid and looks very fine. I got back here at 7.30, a little tired, but well satisfied with my day. I shall go there again as soon as possible. I think Henry will be pleased to find a box of cigars when he gets back.

Perhaps I shall have an opportunity to-day of sending a verbal message to your father. I will tell him that Petit Val has not been plundered, that you are well and that you very much desire them to leave Paris as soon as possible.

Henry is delighted that he can shoot over the property of Piple, where he used not to be invited. He has asked a favour of Thiele, namely to be allowed to write vouchers for the game he shoots, because he looks forward to annoying Hottinguer later on when he hands them over to him.

FERRIÈRES, *September* 30, 1870

General Goltz[1] is sitting at the table and is writing a letter to his wife. I am to send it off with this one. He looks very well and is in capital health. Tell this to Gräfin Goltz.

He told me that Hermann was very well and that he had been proposed for a commission. Tell this to Mimi, so that she can write to Trachenberg about it. I have seen some of the officers of the Gardes du Corps. Croy and Jagow are well. If I have time I will write a line to Pourtalès so that he can tell his daughter about it.

Yesterday afternoon there was a knock at my door. Who do you think it was? General Thiele, accompanied by Henry, who had come to return my visit. Henry gay as a lark. He asked me to send off a letter for him enclosing a hundred francs. I suspect it is for his illegitimate half! They left again at 4 p.m. in order to be back at Petit Val at six—their dinner-hour. Here is another piece of news? Do you remember Mr. Forbes? He went away from here with the intention of getting into Paris. I did not like to give him a letter for fear of compromising him ; but he promised me he would call on your father at once and tell him that Petit Val is not destroyed, that you are well and that you beg him to leave Paris. There is nothing more to be done now until he has found means of sending me an answer.

[1] Karl Friedrich Graf von der Goltz, born 1815; joined 1st Prussian Cuirassiers at Breslau 1832; became officer 1833; was in suite of Marshal Burgeaud in Algeria 1844-5; Aide-de-Camp to Prince Wilhelm of Prussia 1848; in 1859 Lieutenant-Colonel in command of King's Hussars at Bonn; 1861 Aide-de-Camp to King Wilhelm of Prussia; 1864 and 1866 commanded the Cavalry Brigade; in 1870–71 Commander of Guards Cavalry Division, and as such took part in battles of Gravelotte, Sedan, and the siege of Paris; made Lieutenant-General in 1870, and Aide-de-Camp to Kaiser. Died 1901.

My trip to Petit Val the day before yesterday did me a great deal of good. I looked at all the rooms and found everything in good order. There is nobody in your little room nor in the apartment on the right of it; nor in your father's room. Henry gets on very well with the officers. They shoot together and play billiards of an evening.

At Piple everything is in good order, although nobody but the cook and a few servants is left there. It is the same at Gros Bois. I looked at Paris for some time through my glasses from the terrace at Piple. Everything looks peaceful. The chimneys of the factories are smoking. One does not see a sign of troops. But for all that there was fighting to-day, even near Charenton. Things are not going so well in the village of Sucy as at Petit Val. The greater part of the inhabitants have gone, and those who are left are suffering because their provisions are taken away from them. Thiele does all he can to maintain order, but he can't be everywhere. It is to be hoped the end will come soon. The country will suffer from the effects of this for some time.

In a few days, if Bismarck is in a good humour, I will try to go over there again for some hours. I hope you have quite given up the idea of coming here now. It would be an act of unpardonable folly; and just think of the children, whom you could not bring with you. You should devote yourself to them above all.

If Paris surrenders shortly—and this must happen one of these days—and if your father goes to Petit Val, I will try to send for you. But certainly not until then. I can quite understand that you are bored at Berlin, but you must resign yourself to that. I assure you that I have not been amusing myself either since we have been at Ferrières. The days are terribly long and still we have lots to do. I could not manage to get out yesterday till eight o'clock in the evening; and then

only to get a whiff of air for a moment in the park. Happily the weather is still beautiful, but we don't get much out of it. . . .

You don't tell me if my mother is at Berlin, or if she has left, and where she has gone to.

Don't forget to tell me. I should be delighted if she had gone, for as things are now she risks being arrested if she does not keep quiet and I am not there to help her in any way. . . .

FERRIÈRES, *Saturday, October* 1, 1870
(2 *p.m.*)

I received your lines of Tuesday yesterday, telling me you had been to hear the "Meistersinger."[1] And yet you complain of your fate!

If I could only hear a little good music, I should be right pleased. This musical expedition of yours shows me that you are well, and that is the main point. My health continues to be satisfactory, only I feel very tired, and don't know why. Perhaps it is because we don't get enough air and exercise. Yesterday evening Keudell and I went for a ride at seven o'clock. It was almost dark by that time, and we had to return at the end of half an hour. I rode the little Bay for the first time; hitherto I have had a kind of dislike to him. I have quite got over that now. I like him very much. It is a pity that he has rather a hard mouth. But for that I think you could ride him. Anyhow I think he will be capital in harness. Unfortunately we have not got as far as this yet.

There was a little fighting yesterday. The French attacked, but were repulsed, and it is said that they lost 300 prisoners and that one of their generals has been seriously wounded. These little skirmishes are

[1] *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, opera by Richard Wagner.

quite useless. They are not decisive, and they always cost a lot of blood.

There is nothing new to tell you from here. It is still very tedious, and I hope we shall soon change our quarters.

Poor Bussière has been at last released. (I contributed a little to this.) I am very glad for the inhabitants of Strassburg that the city has at last surrendered. They suffered terribly. . . .

FERRIÈRES, *October* 2, 1870
(*Sunday*, 1.30 *p.m.*)

The day before yesterday I got a line from you; yesterday nothing; and to-day also nothing—as yet at all events. This is unpleasant, and I don't like it at all. . . .

I am impatiently waiting for a change of quarters. This morning I went to the church for a moment. It is a delightful building. Afterwards I sat in front of the Château with Lehndorff, who can walk a bit now, and with Alten, who is better. He has suffered a good deal from fever lately. It was so hot in the sun that I got a headache. When I returned, I found Gericke, the chiropodist, the man with the bows and scrapes! The King sent for him, so we all make use of him.

No news from Paris. For the present I think we shall have to go without news. I am sure that when there is a more serious attack, some sort of negotiations will take place. I hope your father will take advantage of this to send me some news. If I can, I will go to-morrow for an hour or two to Petit Val; if not I will send four bottles of champagne that I have bought and four boxes of cigarettes for Henry. He is getting on very well with the officers, so you need not be at all anxious about him. Bill Bismarck came to see his father to-day. You would not recognise

him! He has a beard, and was made an officer yesterday, and is of course very proud of this. He will dine with us and will afterwards return to rejoin his regiment. Lehndorff and Tresckow beg me to send you their compliments. By the way, why didn't you tell me that Frau von Prillwitz had had a baby and that you rendered assistance? *Perponcher*[1] knew of it the evening of *the day before yesterday*.

Give my compliments and congratulations to Frau von Prillwitz.

FERRIÈRES, *Monday, October* 3, 1870
(9 *a.m.*)

Only a line to tell you that I am well. The King has just sent me word that he is going to Sucy at ten o'clock in order to see Piple and Grosbois, and that he hopes to see me there. So I am off as quick as possible in order to be there before him.

I will write to you to-morrow at greater length.

FERRIÈRES, *Monday, October* 4, 1870

I hope you received my little note of yesterday morning. Our expedition was very pretty and very nice; but the object of my co-operation—the visit to Petit Val—was not attained. We left at 11.15. I had sent on my horses in advance and drove myself in the Aides-de-Camp's carriage. As we entered Sucy (close to M. de Ginoux' park) the Generals were in attendance on the King. He mounted his horse to see the troops. It was only a step from there to Piple. I kept in the background so as not to appear as if I wanted to claim his attention. When we left Sucy

[1] Colonel Graf von Perponcher-Sedlnitzky, then Court Marshal to the King, afterwards Lord Marshal of the Court of Kaiser Wilhelm I., and Lieutenant-General à la suite of the army.

we went to Brétonne, where there were a number of troops who shouted "Hurrah!" enough to deafen us. In the midst of this noise I found myself in the presence of the King, so that I could not avoid him. He called me up to him and told me he had only just heard that we had passed close to Petit Val, and that he was much distressed and annoyed that he had not been told of it. I replied that I was very grateful for the gracious intention. Tresckow came up and asked me if the King could not pass that way in returning here. I declined, saying that there was nothing to see and that I did not like to make the King take a roundabout road after a tiring ride. So the matter remained as it was. We were at Valenton again, where we lunched at a charming house with the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen. There is a splendid view of Paris from there.

Afterwards, as it was already pretty late, we left without even seeing Grosbois, which I regret for the King's sake. It was also too late for me to go to Petit Val, and my horses were tired. So I got into the carriage again and sent my groom with a box of cigarettes to Henry and a message explaining why I could not come myself. Don't bother yourself because the King's visit did not come off. Petit Val is really not very pretty just now. The garden is in disorder, the rooms only half furnished, and the vestibule crammed with old cases. It is all very ugly, and I am just as well pleased that the King did not see it in this condition. He at least intended going there; and it seemed to me as if he were a little angry with his gentlemen for not having told him about it in good time.

The postman brought me no letter yesterday! Why? I hope to get one to-day at all events. . . .

FERRIÈRES, *Wednesday, October* 5, 1870
(8 *p.m.*)

I sent you a letter yesterday by the Cabinet postman and now take advantage of a spare moment before the departure of the courier to send you another greeting. Your letters of the 31st and 1st have reached me. I was very glad to have some news of you yesterday evening. . . .

My horses left yesterday morning and I gave Littmann a box of cigarettes and a letter for your brother Henry. We are leaving Ferrières in an hour, and I am right pleased about it. I was bored here from the very first day. You will know from the telegrams and newspapers long before this letter arrives where we shall have gone to. I won't tell you in this letter because one can never foresee whether a courier will be intercepted; and it is not necessary for people to know too soon in what direction the General Staff is moving. I can tell you however that we shall pass very close to Petit Val. Henry knows this, so he will perhaps seize the opportunity for saying "good morning" to me as we pass. I quite agree with you that Charles could very well be with his parents at a time like this, Raymond too. But none of them will ever do what is sensible. As for your father, I think that in this case you do him an injustice. From what Henry tells me, he wanted to remain at Petit Val; it was your mother who practically forced him to go to Paris. People ask in vain why they went there! In their place I should have left one of my sons at Petit Val and the other at their house at Paris, because houses left entirely abandoned are always in greater danger of being plundered than the others, and I should have gone to England or to Belgium to await the end of the war.

Did I tell you that I went to Guernante last Sunday?

It is really a charming spot. But it does not belong to M. de Lareinty[1] as you supposed. Guernante belongs to Mme. de Dampierre and to her brother M. de Tholozan, who came to see me on business. I returned his visit on Sunday. He is a stout man, and very simple-minded. He loaded me with kindnesses and promised to invite me to shoot after peace is concluded. Of course this means—if there is any game left! For just now there are some Württemberg officers there who are killing all the game they can find.

You ask me where I am living here at Ferrières. It is rather difficult to explain. My room is on the ground floor (under the storey where we lived, on the same landing as the *salon des chasseurs*). As you leave the Château on the side where the water is situated, it is on the right, the last room before coming to the Tower. . . . God knows what will happen to Ferrières when we are gone. I doubt that our successors will show the same consideration that we did for the house and all that is in it.

I am very glad that Nelly and baby are quite well again. What I don't understand is your "moral lassitude" and your desire to leave Berlin. Try to get over this feeling, as it would be very difficult to go away now. Where could you go to with the children? As for Petit Val—you must not think of such a thing for a moment. I would not allow it under any pretext whatever, and you ought to trust me, for I should not say so without good reasons, as you well know that nothing would give me so much pleasure as to have you here if it were possible. But it is not possible. So be patient, my Touti. As soon as it can be done, I assure you that I shall do my best to arrange that we can come together again here or elsewhere. . . .

[1] Marquis de Lareinty, an acquaintance of the family.

VERSAILLES, *October* 7, 1870.

This morning a postman left at ten o'clock, but I was not told of it, so that I could not make use of him. I am living a pretty good distance from the Chancery—at the Avenue St. Cloud 25. . . .

We left Ferrières at 9 a.m. the day before yesterday, travelling *viâ* Boissy, Villeneuve St. George, and Choissy-le-Roi where we arrived at 2 p.m., and we reached this place at four o'clock. The heat and the dust were horrible. The King remained longer than we did at Choissy-le-Roi, in order to see the troops. At Villeneuve St. George the bridge of boats has been blown up. One cannot understand this madness on the part of the French. They have destroyed bridges and railways to the tune of millions, and all for no purpose whatever. I need not tell you how delighted we were to see a civilised town. We took a bath, and afterwards dined at the Hôtel des Reservoirs. The dinner (there were eight of us) cost us the small sum of 120 francs. The town wears its usual aspect, only there are more soldiers. One sees shops; well-dressed people walking about; and conveyances. It is a real pleasure to see them!

At the Hôtel des Reservoirs I found General Burnside and Mr. Forbes, who as you know spent some days at Paris. Mr. Forbes went to the Rue de Courcelles. Everybody was well. He executed my commission, but your father sent me word that he preferred to go on remaining at Paris. I saw the Minister of Greece yesterday, M. Phocion Roque, whom you remember, with his wife and all the legation. They got out of Paris yesterday with a *parlementaire*, safe-conducts and a recommendation from Mr. Washburne. They were brought here and we are going to send them on to Tours, where they want to go.

M. Roque told me that Washburne wanted to remain

for some time longer in Paris, but at a given moment he would leave with all the other foreigners. So I suppose your father and all the family will join him. You must not be anxious, as they will let them get out all right. I am certain to know of it at once; and if your father desires to go to Belgium or elsewhere until the war is over, I will find some way of arranging it. If the war is going to last, this would be better, as there is sure to be a famine in Paris in course of time—and in the environs too—and it would be better not to be there then. Little B., a boy of twelve years of age, told me that it was already very difficult to get meat at Paris. When I asked him if there were not a good many cattle in the Bois de Boulogne, he said that there had been a good many, but that they were nearly all dead. What will happen if they eat up all their provisions before capitulating? and how will they feed two millions of men afterwards, all the environs being already exhausted?

At two o'clock yesterday we saw the Grand Fountains. The King and all the Princes with their suites were present. The public were allowed to enter and walked about amongst the officers. It was a very curious sight. A large black and white flag was flying from the Château.

If Louis XIV. has still got the power of feeling, this ought to make a strange impression upon him!

Good-bye, Darling. The Minister has sent for me, so I must hurry up and dress.

VERSAILLES, *October* 7, 1870
(11 *p.m.*)

As I don't know if I shall have much time to-morrow morning before the courier leaves, as he now goes at 10 a.m., I will write you another line before going to bed.

It is very sad to have to spend my birthday quite alone; and it annoys me a good deal. I was pleased at receiving to-night, before I left the Chancery, your letter of the 4th, which arrived about ten o'clock. I am very glad to hear that Nelly is better. I was a little anxious the whole day without wanting to admit it to myself. These violent attacks of coughing always make one anxious. If they recur, don't hesitate to send for another doctor, and ask Princess Radziwill to help you in this matter, as she will be sure to name a good one. Our good Pesch won't be offended, and in a serious case you mustn't be reduced to having recourse to his lights alone. Above all, in the case of children one must not lose time. Let us hope that the attack has passed off by this time. I trust your letter to-morrow will quite ease my mind on this subject. Kiss Nelly for me, and tell her that her letter pleased me very much.

I have no particular news to tell you from here. I went for a drive with Bismarck this afternoon. We went down to the Château and visited the wounded, who are put up on the ground floor, where they are exceedingly comfortable. It is a curious sight to see them in these immense saloons with large pictures in gold frames containing the history of France above their beds. Over the bed of a Bavarian there was a picture representing the battle of Rocroy. All the french-windows are open towards the terrace; and two or three beds were outside, because the sun was shining so nicely. There are a number of sisters of charity and the whole looks well. From there we went to see the orangery, which is splendid. There is one orange-tree over four hundred years old, and another that was the favourite of Louis XIV., which very probably could tell a good many stories! After that we took a long walk in the park and returned to the Château, where we got into the carriage and drove home again.

I don't know what kind of story people have been telling about me, Abeken and some franc-tireurs, but you can safely say that it is an invention, because I have not as yet seen the ghost of a franc-tireur. I suppose it is a confusion: it probably refers to an adventure that Abeken and Keudell had on the day of the battle of Beaumont, or on the day after. Bismarck, Bismarck-Bohlen and I had left in the morning and we slept at Vendresse. Keudell and Abeken were detained on business and could not leave for some hours afterwards, when they started on horseback. Instead of riding straight to Vendresse, they went by some roundabout roads, lost their way a bit, and all of a sudden they saw about ten Frenchmen some distance off, armed with chassepots. Without wasting any time on reflection, they turned their horses' heads and rode off at a good round trot in order to avoid so unforeseen a meeting. On our side we were rather anxious because they had not arrived by 11 p.m. That is the story, probably, that people have got hold of. I did not play a part in it; but I must add that if I had been there, I should have acted in the same way.

How can you possibly ask who is Mr. Forbes? Why, of course, the American—the father of two young girls whom, if I am not mistaken, we met at Paris in days gone by. He is still here: I saw him this morning. Peter Wittgenstein[1] has also been here since yesterday, but I have not seen him yet, which I very much regret.

I am now going to bed, and to-morrow I shall wake up with another year upon my shoulders. I changed my apartment to day and am now at 85 Avenue St. Cloud. I have two rooms, and the bed seems to be a good one, which is essential for me. . . .

[1] Prinz Peter Sayn-Wittgenstein-Carlsburg, brother of Prinzessin Chlodwig zu Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, whose husband was afterwards the third Chancellor of the German Empire.

October 8, 1870 (8.30 *a.m.*)

I have just got up after having slept pretty badly, and I will begin my birthday by writing a few lines to you.

Perhaps you have just woke up and are thinking of me. Doubtless you are thinking the same as I am—that it is very annoying to be still separated on a day like this, and that the war is lasting a very long time. With all my heart I wish that the end may soon come for us and for everybody, and that for the future we shall always be together on this day. Since yesterday the weather, which has been so beautiful for three weeks, has changed. The sky is dark and there was rain last night. I am afraid we shall have a good deal of rain now, and this will not be pleasant.

I passed the night in my new apartment. I only discovered just now that I was quite alone. Nobody but myself in four or five rooms! The Chancery servant who waits on me lives downstairs with Bucher.[1] This mustn't continue. I will engage a servant to-day who must remain in the apartment.

What shall I do to keep my birthday? It will be no change to drink some Champagne, because this is the wine that we drink every day at dinner. But I will drink your and the children's health alone. . . .

VERSAILLES, *October* 8, 1870
(11 *p.m.*)

This morning Wittgenstein sent me a letter from Ring that he had brought from Paris. Amongst other things it contained the enclosed line from your mother, dated 22nd September. It is rather stale news, but I

[1] Lothar Bucher, diplomatist, b. 1817. In 1850 he wrote articles in London for the *National Zeitung*. After a chequered political career Bismarck gave him an appointment in the Foreign Office in 1864. From 1869–76 he always accompanied Bismarck to Varzin, the Chancellor's country seat. In 1870 he joined Bismarck at Ferrières, and was afterwards occupied at the Berlin Congress. Died 1892.

suppose that it will give you pleasure anyhow to see your mother's handwriting. I suppose it was written immediately after she received my pencil line that Ring took with him, and that he has had no opportunity before now of sending it to me. One often hears of opportunities when it is too late. That is what happened to me to-day. Somebody went to Paris and I could have given him a verbal commission for your mother, but I heard of it too late.

Whatever you do, don't get anxious. I am *sure* that Washburne will get out of Paris with all his compatriots before their stay there becomes intolerable. In that case they are certain to come here. I will put up your parents at Petit Val, or, if they prefer it, I will get them some passports to enable them to go elsewhere. If they go to Brussels or to Switzerland, you could go to join them, if you are well, and could remain with them until the war is over.

Wittgenstein told me the story about St. Priest. He was in the park at Monceau in front of Rothschild's house, dressed in plain clothes, and was taking notes, when the crowd took him for a spy. Despite his protestations, two men seized him, each by one arm, to bring him to the guard, and on the way some scoundrel came up to him and gave him *a tremendous box on the ears!* He was let go at once, but he won't have a great partiality for the populace of Paris! Mme. de Gallifet walks about in a black dress with the badge of the Red Cross. The poor Bois de Boulogne has really been *felled right up to the lake!*

Such stupidity as this is inconceivable! No letter from you to-night. . . .

October 9 (9 *a.m.*)

No letter again this morning! The weather is decidedly breaking up, and this bores me a good deal. My only amusement was taking an occasional walk.

VERSAILLES, *October* 9, 1870
(11 *p.m.*)

My letter had hardly left this morning when I received your lines of the 5th, which ought to have arrived yesterday. Your letter is very short, but it gave me great pleasure because it contains your assurance that Nelly is well. I was very anxious the last few days because I fancied that you were hiding the truth from me in order not to frighten me.

I hope that Nelly is quite well now, and baby also, of whom you say nothing to-day.

I have had a very tiresome day. Feeling very tired about two o'clock in the afternoon, I came to my rooms and lay down on my bed, where I slept till a quarter to six. That did me good.

This evening I had an agreeable surprise. Stolberg[1] arrived with Otto, who immediately came to see me. We spent the whole evening together and I have just returned from accompanying him home. They have had a fairly interesting journey over the whole ground where fighting has taken place. He saw Walter near Metz: he was very well and made them take a walk to the outposts, where some chassepot bullets whistled over their heads. Otto does not like that. On the whole he considers that he gets bad quarters and bad food, so that he wants to return to Breslau as quickly as possible.

He says that you seriously thought of coming here and of putting up at Petit Val or elsewhere. I hope you gave up this idea after what I wrote to you. It can't possibly be done. Besides, your place is with the children. It will be another matter when your parents get out of Paris. If they were to go to Brussels or some such place, I could quite understand your

[1] Graf Udo Stolberg, Lieutenant in the Gardes du Corps.

wanting to go to see them and I should offer no opposition. But for the present you must be patient.

There is no news to tell you. Some small skirmishes are going on all around us, but nothing serious has happened up to now. Meanwhile, life is mortally dull!

10th October (9 *a.m.*)

I have just woke up, and have drunk my coffee near a good open flaming fire, just the sort of fire you like. The sky is grey and does not promise much pleasure for to-day! Another dull day! You see, I am beginning to count the days. Otto will be here soon, and I hope he will cheer me up a bit. . . .

VERSAILLES, *October* 10, 1870
(11.30 *p.m.*)

Only two lines: I had a good deal of work to-day and am very tired. I must get up early to morrow.

General Burnside and Mr. Forbes returned this afternoon from Paris. They saw your father and mother yesterday evening,—both very well. Enclosed is your mother's letter, which they brought with them. The chief thing is that they are well. For the rest, they entertain the same illusions as do others about the defence of Paris. It will soon be seen that this is madness—when there is nothing more to eat, and when our big artillery have disabled some of the forts! I suppose Mr. Washburne will not prolong his stay till then, and that he will leave with his compatriots. So don't be anxious, darling.

I received a letter this evening from the outposts—guess from whom?—from Jules Alfonso,[1] who asks as a favour that he may be permitted to leave in order to join his regiment at Havana. I have sent his letter to

[1] A friend of the family.

the General Staff, but don't know whether they will let him pass.

This evening we heard some cannon shots coming from Paris. The enemy still continue to fire at every patrol with cannon balls. It is getting very annoying and the end ought to come soon.

Good-night, Darling. I am as tired as a dog. I received to-day your letter of the 6th and am glad that Nelly is well. You told me that you were enclosing a letter for Croy; but—just like you—you forgot it!

Good night. I will add a line to-morrow morning.

October 11 (8.30 *a.m.*)

I have some important work to do, my Touti, which I must attend to at once—so I can only add one line. Stolberg and Otto leave to-morrow for Boissy. Otto will go to Petit Val. I am giving him a letter from your mother and one from myself for Henry with some cigarettes. Of course it is now too far for me to be able to go there. Otto will write you a line and will tell Henry to write to you. . . .

VERSAILLES, *October* 11, 1870
(*after midnight*)

Enclosed is a line from your mother that Jules Alfonso brought me to-night. He found means to get out, I don't know how. Of course he pretends now to be a rabid Prussian! He says they haven't more than 15,000 oxen at Paris, 1,500 of which are distributed every day—a very small number for so many people. Consequently they are already beginning to kill the horses. In the Garde Nationale there are 22 battalions without any *rifles* at all; and a third of the others have only got percussion guns! Flourens made his demonstration the other day at the head of eight battalions. Trochu's eloquence succeeded in calming

them once more. But all this will doubtless recommence, and many people amongst the conservatives are beginning to look forward to the entry of the Prussians so that they can disarm the canaille of Belleville. This is what your friend Jules says!

I will try to get him a safe-conduct to-morrow so that he can go to England and thence to Havana. Otto leaves to-morrow. I am giving him a letter from your mother for Henry and shall write myself also. I will get him to write a long letter. If you want to write to him, send me the letter. He would certainly be pleased to get it, for he is horribly bored.

I dined with the Crown Prince. He was very kind. The dinner was good, and, as poor Wrede would say, the hospitality excellent!

I received your letters of the 7th and 8th to-day, both of which gave me great pleasure, especially the letter of the 8th, which was long and very nice. I hope you are well and the children also.

VERSAILLES, *October* 12, 1870
(11.30 *p.m.*)

The courier came to-day without any letter from you. I miss your letters when they don't arrive and am anxious besides. I hope you are well and the children also.

Enclosed is a paper authorising you to receive all my letters and to sign the receipt in my name. If necessary, get Abeken's signature certified at the Foreign Office by Gundlach or Landsberg. When you receive the registered letter from Düsseldorf, send me the receipt that it will contain so that I can sign it. Keep the money till I return, and take from it what you require in order to pay the rent of the apartment. Get a receipt from the old Geheimrath in the first storey, and get him to state what you have to give to the two porters.

Jules Alfonso is still here and is waiting impatiently for the necessary permits to get off to England, where his whole family is. I hope to get them for him to-morrow morning. He begs me to send you his best compliments.

There was a big engagement near Orléans yesterday against the so-called Army of the Loire. It lasted till the evening. The French were repulsed, and Orléans was taken and occupied. It is to be hoped they will soon hear of this at Paris. This will destroy the illusions they still entertain of receiving assistance from the provinces. Meanwhile another Spaniard who left Paris this morning confirmed the report that they have at most only 15,000 oxen more. All the butchers' shops are in the hands of the Government. People have to stand waiting *en queue* for their meat from four o'clock in the morning. The shops open at seven and close at ten. Those who haven't got hold of anything by then have to go without. In the restaurants those who can afford to pay ten francs or more get beef; below that price there is only horse-flesh to be had. It seems that Trochu, who after all is a good soldier, does not deceive himself about the defence of Paris, but he can't abandon his post under these painful circumstances. It seems that they still have gas, but only one jet in four is lighted. This state of affairs can't be comfortable. Let us hope that they will finish by admitting their folly, and that they will resign themselves to the necessity of treating with us. The Government continues to conceal the truth from the people. They are taking a heavy responsibility upon themselves.

Colonel Lindsay[1] took a line this morning from me to your mother. I told her you were well and that

[1] Colonel Lindsay, A.D.C. to the Prince of Wales; he came over with hospital stores.

I had written to Henry to ask him to send me a letter for you that I would try to pass into Paris on the first opportunity. Otto took my letter for Henry, in which I also told him to send me a long letter for you.

It is really very funny that your mother is so French. This comes of living thirty years in Paris and of hearing the whole time that the French are the first nation in the world. One must not speak against *them;* but *they* may do what they like.

What they say about our hatred of them has no sense in it. We don't entertain any hatred for them at all, but we foresee that France will have her revenge as soon as possible, and we owe it to ourselves to take our precautions. That is why we must have Strassburg and Metz—not merely in order to aggrandise our country—that would be of no use to us; but these positions will give us an advantage against the new attack that we must expect.

Your mother will jump if she sees that Petit Val is called "the Hatzfeldt property"! I don't even want to have it. But it would have been very clever to have authorised me under these circumstances to proclaim that it belonged to you, as I should then have been in a better position to ask for the *King's protection.*

October 13 (9 *a.m.*)

Still no letter. I hope to have one for certain in the course of the day. . . . Everything is beginning to look ugly here. Heavy rain and a wind strong enough to tear up the trees. You can soon send me a warm overcoat. The buttons must be *yellow.* What I should like to have above all is gloves. I am very glad that you don't feel dull. I wish I could say the same of myself. Fortunately for me, I have a fair amount to do. . . .

VERSAILLES, *October* 13, 1870
(11 *p.m.*)

At last I have received your letter of the 11th this evening. It seems I was not anxious for nothing, as you were somewhat unwell. I am glad it is all over. Do not be alarmed about me. I assure you there is no danger. You must remember that we are surrounded here by a very respectable military force, and that we do not leave the town. The most that we do is to go for a ride in the park, and that really is not dangerous. To-day we went again to the "Petit Trianon" that I am always glad to see again. It is quite charming. If I had a property and some money I should build a house like it. We went to the hamlet on horseback (which is forbidden at ordinary times) and took a walk through the garden.

One of these days, when I have time, I shall pay another visit to the picture gallery in order to be able to look at the pictures quietly at my ease. But I'm afraid I shall not have time to do so. To-day again I hadn't a minute to myself, except the two hours when I took a ride with Bismarck. He sent for me at least fifteen times during the day. It is much nicer now that we dine at six o'clock, but we sit at table too long and eat and drink too much. Despite this, however, I am very well; only I don't get enough sleep, because I go to bed late and get up at 8.30; but I manage to make up for it a bit by getting a few hours' sleep every two or three days before dinner when I get the time.

I got Jules Alfonso his permission to leave for Belgium, and he said good-bye to me this morning. He continued to express pronounced sympathy for Prussia! This shows that the strongest always have friends! It is said that there were a few little fights to-day between the outposts, but they were of no im-

portance. But it seems that the palace of St. Cloud is completely in flames. They persist in firing on it from Mont St. Valérien. It is a great pity. To-day I saw long rows of peasants pass here with their children and baggage. They are the inhabitants of the villages that are exposed to the fire, whom we compel to leave in their own interest. But it is very sad. . . .

VERSAILLES, *October* 14, 1870
(11.30 *p.m.*)

No letter from you to-day. It seems that the courier who ought to come this evening is late in consequence of a railway accident, and that he won't be here till some time to-morrow.

I went to the King this evening—the first time since our arrival here—he was extremely kind. There were a great number of princes there—the Grand Duke of Weimar, Prince Karl, Prince Adalbert, Prince Luitpold and Prince Otto of Bavaria, the Duke of Gotha, and the Prince of Hesse. There was a good deal of talk about St. Cloud, which is certainly burnt down from top to bottom, and I had to tell all my recollections from the days of the Empress. I am really sorry that all this has been destroyed—all the furniture, the pictures—everything. Our soldiers have been able to save a portion of the library, but that is all.

We took a very nice ride the day before yesterday. I thought of you: it would have amused you a good deal if you had been there and had been in a condition to ride poor "Cocodette." There are long alleys reaching farther than one can see and ponds innumerable. It is really very pretty. We had a good trot that lasted nearly two hours and that did me a great deal of good. To-morrow we were to have had some shooting at last,

but it has been put off till Monday as we have so much to do—perhaps indeed to the Greek Kalends.

We allowed the Chancellor of the Legation of the United States to re-enter Paris after having left it some days ago. It is a great and exceptional favour conferred on America alone. Of course I gave him a line for your mother telling her that I had good news of you and of Henry, who is very well. Colonel Lindsay has not yet returned; but I think he will be here to-morrow. He will bring me a letter from your mother, that I will forward to you at once.

October 15 (9 *a.m.*)

Good-morning, my Touti. Another tedious day is about to begin. How many shall I have still before the end of the war? I hope that Nelly does not cough at all now and that baby is quite well. Kiss them both for me. You don't tell me how you pass your evenings when you are well. Do you go to Mimi sometimes? Whom do you meet there of an evening? . . .

VERSAILLES, *October* 15, 1870
(11 *p.m.*)

I received your letters of the 11th and 12th to-day one after the other, and was very glad to have some news of you at last. . . . It was very useful for me to hear of the arrival of Gräfin Bismarck and of Herbert. Bismarck was rather alarmed, as he had had no news at all, so he was very pleased when I told him that Herbert looked well and hardly limped any more.

If you are having a race with Gräfin Perponcher as regards correspondence, you will certainly win, for I write every blessed day. But if it is a question of the length of her letters and yours you will perhaps lose, as I am quite certain that she always writes letters

four pages long, whereas I am forced to content myself often with a line or two. Perhaps, too, Perponcher will beat me on this point, but he has a lot of time and mine is unfortunately very limited.

Bismarck-Bohlen and I took a very nice ride to-day to Vaucresson and a little beyond, as far as a hill from which one has a good view of Paris. Unfortunately it was very misty. At the foot of the hill one could see smoke, which we supposed came from the Château de St. Cloud, which is all but burnt down. The furniture of eight rooms has been saved and part of the library.

Don't be in the least alarmed, my love; I am very careful and do not go anywhere where there is danger. There is none in the house where I live. Keudell and Bucher are with me, and I have a servant of my own; and the people of the house are very pleased to have us.

Henry has written me a line to say that he is well; but that he wants some money. I will try to send him two or three hundred francs to-morrow. Colonel Lindsay has not returned yet, so that I have no news of your mother. . . .

VERSAILLES, *October* 15, 1870
(*midnight*)

Only a line as I am extremely tired. The Nuncio arrived this evening, and I had the pleasure of running about with him for two hours in order to find him an apartment. I have just come in tired, wet and in a bad temper. At the Hôtel des Reservoirs I had to wait an hour without getting an answer, and that put me into such a rage that I threatened to have them put in prison. At last I have got some food and a room for him, so I shall go to bed. As some consolation I find now on getting to my room a letter from the Minister of Haiti, who asks to have a talk with me.

Enclosed is a line from your mother, that Colonel Lindsay brought with him from Paris yesterday evening. She threatens that she will eat the ponies. I again advised her through Washburne's chancellor to leave Paris in any case with Washburne, who, I hope, will leave before long. If the ponies are taken away from me, I will demand damages from the French. If she would only reflect a little, your mother should hand over to you by deed the house at Paris, because if anything were to happen to it after their departure you could claim damages, as a Prussian subject. But she will take good care not to do it. Good night, Darling. I am off to bed. I will *add* a line to-morrow. No letter from you to-day.

October 16 (8 *a.m.*)

I have just been called, and have been told that we are to go out shooting at 9.30. At last! So I have only just time to wish you good morning, my Touti, and to dress myself. I advise you to send off Mr. Stone's letter *viâ* London. But don't mention that it is shut, because I ought to open it by rights. I must tell your mother only to send me open letters in future.

Good-bye, my Darling, I hope to get a letter from you to-day. . . .

VERSAILLES, *October* 17, 1870

Just as I was starting to go out shooting yesterday I received your letter of the 14th, containing one for your mother and another for Henry. I had just written a letter to him enclosing two hundred francs that he had asked for, and I enclosed yours with it. As soon as I get his answer I will send it to you. As for your letter to your mother, I am obliged to wait for an opportunity to send it; and I must open it, otherwise it might compromise the person carrying it.

We had a delightful day's shooting. There were three of us—Radziwill, Waldersee and I; and we shot over the coverts of Marly, where we remained from 11.30 until 2.30. We had ten soldiers as beaters, who took great pleasure in their work and were as delighted as children over every head of game that fell. There is not much game left, because a great deal has been already shot. Our guns were bad too, and we hadn't enough cartridges. Despite all this, however, we bagged twenty-five pheasants, nine rabbits, and two roedeer. My share of the bag was eleven pheasants and four rabbits. We should easily have got as many again if we had had more cartridges and if we had used them to shoot the thousands of rabbits that abound there. The weather was beautiful, so I enjoyed myself immensely. Unfortunately my boots hurt me, so that I got home with one foot quite blistered.

We shall go out again as soon as we have got some more cartridges. You will have seen in the newspapers that we have had General Boyer here, the chief of Bazaine's staff. He was in full uniform accompanied by Capitaine Milson and our friend Dieskau.[1] This created a great sensation here: lots of people crowded round our door. It is said that there were shouts of "Vive la France!" but everybody hoped that this meant the approach of peace. As for Bourbaki—that is a long story, in which there is a misunderstanding that we do not comprehend ourselves. The one point that is certain is, that the King had allowed him to re-enter Metz, and that instead of that he accepted a command at Tours. This is between ourselves, unless it has already appeared in the newspapers, of which I know nothing.

Your newspaper reaches me regularly and always one day too late! You should order two copies and

[1] Lieutenant von Dieskau, of the Dragoons of the Prussian Guard, orderly officer of Prince Friedrich Karl of Prussia.

take one of them to the Foreign Office to be delivered to the courier.

I will try to put on my boots now to go and call upon the Nuncio. I was obliged yesterday to put off doing so. He is to have an audience of the King at noon and wants to leave soon. I am going to arrange this for him. He gives me the impression of being very glad that he is out of Paris.

The day before yesterday I went to see Mme. P. in the evening, for whom your mother had sent a letter—I don't know from whom. The poor woman has got a property at St. Cloud just where the outposts are. I don't know whether I told you that I had seen Le Sourd[1] in the street. He looked a good deal less proud than he did on the day when he delivered the declaration of war. I also met one of the Bussières, who told me that Edmond Pourtalès was at Thun with his wife. You say in your letter that the French officers continue to desert. Where? At Berlin? I hope that you no longer go to visit the prisoners after the scene with the Loftuses. I should have liked to have had some details on this subject.

I think that people at Berlin are wrong when they imagine that the King rides about alone on horseback with an aide-de-camp. He never goes out except in a carriage, as far as I know, and is always attended by one detachment of the Staff Guard in front of the carriage and another behind. It is perhaps true that prudence is not always observed; but what you say goes a little too far. To-day the Crown Prince's birthday is being kept. I must go and write my name in the book. I hope that is all that will have to be done and that no invitations to dinner will be issued. . . .

[1] M. Le Sourd was Chargé d'Affaires of the French Embassy in Berlin. He presented Bismarck with Napoleon's declaration of war.

VERSAILLES, *October* 18, 1870
(*midnight*)

Henry came here this afternoon in order to purchase some provisions. I had gone out to see the Grand Fountains and to do some commissions, so that I did not see him till six o'clock. He waited for me at my rooms. I took him to dine with us. Bismarck was extremely nice to him. After dinner we went out for a walk, and returned for tea, when Bismarck chatted with him for an hour and a half—which he does not do with everybody. He wanted to return that night to Petit Val in his carriage and with the two soldiers whom he has with him, but I would not let him go, as the drive is rather long and the road not quite safe at night. We have put up a bed for him in my salon, and he won't go back till to-morrow morning. At this moment he is writing a letter at this table. He had already written a long letter to you; but I had asked him to add a line, and he is now writing a still longer one.

I received your letter of the 15th this evening. You know, my little pet, that I am always very glad to be able to fulfil your wishes; but firstly, you must tell me the name of the man you want to have released. Then, if there is a way to get him released, I will do what I can. But there isn't much chance of success, because the French have taken very few of our men prisoners; and if there should be an exchange, those who are at hand would be selected. But I will of course do all that I can to carry out your wish.

We saw the Grand Fountains to-day; we rode there with the King. Afterwards Bismarck-Bohlen and I had a very nice ride. I rode the little Bay. He has been quite misunderstood up to now. He is a charming horse and I like him very much; in fact, I think that if I bring him back safe and sound, you will be

able to ride him later on. His trot is not quite even, and he pulls a bit when he is with other horses; but he gallops nicely and his manners are excellent—always good-tempered.

The Nuncio was received to-day by the King and Crown Prince and leaves again to-morrow. He sends you his compliments. I am very thankful that he is going away, for since he has been here he has written me at least two letters a day to ask me something or other. I've still got the Ministers of Haiti and Colombia on my hands, but hope to get rid of them to-morrow.

This evening, in the course of conversation with Bismarck, Henry remarked that he should so much like to get his parents away from Paris. Bismarck replied: "Write and tell them to leave, and your letter shall be enclosed in one to Washburne, who shall see that they succeed in doing so." So I shall make him write this letter to-morrow morning, because there is no doubt that we are going to send something to Jules Favre. I shall also try to forward your letter to your mother. But I'm very much afraid that your father will not want to leave Paris just yet, as he will prefer to wait till Washburne leaves. I have suggested to Henry that your father should register the house in your name, so that I may be able to lodge a claim if anything should happen to it after their departure; and he is willing to advise your father to do this, but I doubt if the latter will agree. He will probably think that I want to take advantage of the situation in order to enrich myself.

There is no other news. . . .

VERSAILLES, *October* 19, 1870
(11.30 *p.m.*)

Henry left for Petit Val after breakfast, accompanied by his two *gardes-du-corps* and provided with his safe-conduct; so he ought to have arrived without any difficulty at his destination.

I dined to-day with the King, who was very amiable; as he always is. He came up twice to speak to me and asked after you. It was a nuisance having to go to the dinner, because the King always dines at four o'clock, and that is the only time when I can ride. Of course this appears to be nothing, but you must know that it is my only amusement, and the only time I have for rest during the whole day.

Don't be anxious, my Love; Henry won't die of hunger. He bought a number of legs of mutton here yesterday, and some boxes of sardines. I gave him some cigarettes, and he went back again very well satisfied with his expedition, intending to come again as soon as possible. Of course Petit Val is too far off for me now; the distance is eight or nine leagues, and I have neither the time nor the necessary horses for so long a journey.

The victory announced by Gambetta is a pure invention. Our troops did not budge from their positions. But Châteaudun was taken this morning after an obstinate resistance on the part of the French. . . .

October 20 (9 *a.m.*)

Now I am up again ready to recommence the same job. It is beginning to be a little fatiguing, never to have a moment's liberty or amusement! I can only hope that this won't last for ever!

Dieskau told me the other day that Wilhelm Redern[1]

[1] Graf Wilhelm Redern, orderly officer of Prince Friedrich Karl of Prussia.

behaved really well in some battle. I was delighted, but he will now be more conceited than ever.

I will write to Düsseldorf this evening, if I can find time to do so, to tell them to send you the letter with the money. It is quite right of you to spend as little as possible, as one can't know how long this war will last, and one must not count on your father for long. I am impatiently waiting for the gloves and cravats. Everything is worn out. They haven't got these things here, and I look like a tramp!

Good-bye, my Touti, I must go and dress myself, in order to go to the office to fetch some papers for some work which is very important. How glad I shall be to be able to give myself up entirely to idleness, when this war is over! . . .

VERSAILLES, *October* 20, 1870
(11.30 *p.m.*)

After having had to fag all the morning over a long letter in French (with which I may say in parenthesis I was very much pleased because the Minister altered scarcely anything in it) I had a very fair day. Towards 3 p.m. Bismarck-Bohlen and I went for a ride. We rode to Ville d'Avray and got on to the roof of the Villa Stern (a delightful property) whence there is a splendid view over Paris. The sky had been rather cloudy up till then; but the weather cleared up, and the sun shone full on Paris, and I was able to make out the places with the aid of my glasses. We could distinctly see the Arc de Triomphe, the Panthéon, the Invalides, St. Clothilde, the Tuileries, and even the arcades of the Rue de Rivoli. You can well imagine that I was greatly interested. I may add for your benefit, that there was no danger where we were standing. After that we rode on a little further, and returned here in time for dinner. Towards 9 p.m. I went to see

Lehndorff with Bismarck-Bohlen. I played two games of billiards with Loucadou, and afterwards, as there is always a little gambling at Lehndorff's, I allowed myself to be persuaded to join for half an hour. I won 20 louis, which was good luck. After dinner I received your letter of the 17th (always put the exact date). You are quite right not to go to dine with Pourtalès now, and I am *very pleased* that you have come to this decision. During my absence you must only go to see women, and you must see that they are women that are well thought of. . . .

By the way, nobody has told me so far that Castelbaja[1] has been shot, consequently I hope it is not true. But they are capable of anything just now in Paris, and I laughed heartily at the idea of Mme. de Baulaincourt[2] being brought up before a magistrate as a spy. Poor woman! I can quite understand her giving up letter-writing entirely. At all events she had the good sense not to remain in Paris. Strangers are beginning to have enough of it there; and now that the Nuncio has gone, the Russians, the English, the Portuguese, and a heap of savages from South America insist on being allowed to depart. This morning I sent some letters to your mother addressed to Mr. Washburne, and I hope they will arrive safely. I have very little hope of their having already decided to leave Paris, but I am sure that the time will soon come when they will have had enough of it, and then there will always be an opportunity of getting them out through the intervention of Washburne, who will not refuse us anything. For the present there are plenty of decent people in Paris: amongst others the Nuncio spoke of the Duchesse de Galiéra, who has an ambulance at her

[1] Marquis de Castelbaja, a young French nobleman, a friend of the Hatzfeldts.

[2] Mme. de Baulaincourt, sister of the Herzogin zu Sagan (second wife of the Herzog, and widow of Graf Maximilian von Hatzfeldt), and daughter of the Comte de Castellane, Maréchal de France.

house. There are also a number of Americans there, and I imagine that they will be properly treated out of regard for the United States.

Now I must give you a very important commission. Tell the tailor to give you at once the things mentioned on the enclosed piece of paper, and send them to me *as quickly as possible.* I am in great need of them. . . .

P.S.—I don't dream of being able to enter Paris; but whatever happens I absolutely forbid you to come here until I expressly tell you you may. Ask Hugo to choose two hundred very good light cigars, large-size—Regalias, dry; and send them to me quickly.

VERSAILLES, *October* 21, 1870

I am not very pleased just now, because the Cabinet postman has just arrived with letters for everybody except for me. You did not write on the 19th. Therefore I shall only send a few lines to you this evening to pay you out: but really I am very tired, not having slept the whole night. It pleased the French to make a little sortie about three o'clock, after having fired an immense number of cannon shots from Mont Valérien. They were twenty-two or twenty-three battalions strong, and the affair lasted till six o'clock. All was over by then; they had taken to their heels after having lost two cannon and a hundred prisoners. We were on horseback all the time, but without being able to find a spot from which we could see the engagement without exposure to the firing. The cannon shots succeeded each other rapidly, and for the first time since Sedan I heard the agreeable music of the *mitrailleuses.*

The King, who was better informed, went to Marly, where one could see something of the attack, though not much. But no doubt they will be at it again soon, and then we shall select a better place.

There is nothing new to tell you from here. The weather continues to be very fine, and I am enjoying it very much. My sole amusement is riding, and when that is no longer possible I shall probably die of ennui. What I miss a good deal is some place where I could pass an hour or two of an evening. It is very nice at Lehndorff's, but they gamble there the whole time and I dont want to contract that habit again. . . .

October 22 (9.30 *a.m.*)

. . . I wrote to Düsseldorf yesterday evening to tell them to send you the letter with the money, so that you will be able to pay the rent. If this wretched war lasts much longer we shall have to take care of the little we have. Personally, I don't think it will last much longer; I imagine it will be over in a month or six weeks. It is useless to add that I shall be very glad for every reason when it is over. Next summer I will hire you a country house on the Rhine if we can't find anything to buy, for it will be impossible to come to France for a couple of years. Good-bye, my Touti; the servant has come to fetch my letter. . . .

VERSAILLES, *October* 22, 1870
(*evening*)

Thanks for the gloves; but you sent me very few. In size they fit perfectly, and I can only admire your talent for doing commissions. Please send me, soon, at least a dozen pairs. And the cravats? I have only got the one I am wearing, and it is torn. Did I tell you that I have a sort of *valet de chambre* in the person of an honest Bavarian, who was formerly in the service of Princess Tschermitcheff and was expelled from Paris on the declaration of war? He is very stupid and annoys me a good deal; but it is pleasant to be *waited upon a little*. Of course I haven't yet taught him to make my bed. You know how difficult to please I

am in that matter. My things are in pretty good order now with the exception of my boots. I have been obliged to get some made here, because it is impossible to get them made in Berlin. I am very curious as to whether my little Heydt has been expelled from Paris, as he is the only man who knows how to make boots for me. If so, I shall apply to the French Government for damages! By the way, I never told you that there was only one nightshirt in my portmanteau and that was full of holes. I am now using three that I had made at Reims.

We had a very good ride to-day, starting with the Minister at 2.30 p.m. He left us at four in order to dine with the King; but we continued our ride till 5.30. After passing by Ville d'Avray we came home by the town and entered the park near the Château, and ended by riding round the Eau des Suisses, returning by the Boulevard de la Reine. The weather was delightful, not too hot. The Bay had a devil in him to-day the whole time: I don't think after all that you will be able to ride him. He is really very obstinate sometimes and does not trot evenly enough because he pulls.

Yesterday's prisoners passed through the town to-day with the two guns, but unfortunately I did not see them. It seems that the inhabitants, who are not yet accustomed to such sights, were rather upset. In the scuffle a French ambulance was also taken. On being recognised it was sent back to-day across *our lines* as far as the French outposts.

October 23 (9.30 *a.m.*)

My Touti, I have been talking too much about the fineness of the weather. To-day it is pouring, and the place looks very melancholy. What does Gräfin Perponcher mean by wanting to come here? I very much doubt whether her husband will consent. For my

part I should think it very silly for several reasons if you were to want to come. One reason is that the road is far from being safe as yet, and this is a sufficient one for me; and I don't want to see you fall into the hands of a band of *francs-tireurs*, who are the greatest *canailles* in the world. When the country is thoroughly cleared and the road is safe, we will see, my Love. You may be quite sure that I shall be very glad when it is possible to let you come. . . .

VERSAILLES, *October* 24, 1870

I received your nice letter of the 20th with the cravats this evening after dinner. The letter with the money from Düsseldorf must have reached you now, for I wrote immediately. I hope you have received it. It seems that people are talking a good deal in Berlin. Why do they want Bismarck to oppose the bombardment of Paris, if it is the only means of securing peace? We don't ask for more, but they are all stark mad at Paris, and nothing will bring them back to their senses but hunger and fire. I should be very grieved to see my dear old Paris destroyed; but one must console oneself with the thought that it would not be our fault, but that it would be owing to their obstinacy.

I saw somebody yesterday who has been for some time at the outposts at St. Cloud, from where the French outposts can be seen very well. It appears that at a certain hour the ladies come out; and then the cannonade begins in order that they may see the sight! It is a scandal, and more so on the part of the women than on that of the men. This war is horrible; it is costing so much blood and tears that one really ought not to look upon it as a mere sight! Above all, the immediate neighbourhood of Paris is suffering immensely, and they won't get over this war for ten

years. Who the devil invented the story that the Iron Cross had been given to me? It is a purely military decoration that I don't believe can be given to me. It is true that it is given to doctors, with a white riband attached to it instead of a black one. Solms got it in this form, and he is indignant. Bismarck-Bohlen foresees that they will give him the same thing and he cannot restrain his anger at the very thought of it. For my part, I don't think we shall get anything at all; at all events it seems to me that this is far more probable. We have worked like dogs and we shan't even get a "thank-you," whereas Perponcher, Rauch and all the aides-de-camp have got the cross for doing nothing at all. In general it is given far too promiscuously to people who have not done much, and it is not given often enough to the common soldiers. This is Bismarck's opinion, which I fully share.

It seems that people are horribly bored at Metz; but on the other hand there is no great amusement here. The age in which we live is not accustomed to wars of thirty years' duration, and three months of war seem to us unbearable. It would really be too stupid if the people at Paris were to let things go so far as to bring on a famine. Perhaps we shall have some news from Paris next Wednesday; it is the day now fixed for communications—now sent by means of a *parlementaire*. There is sure to be something from Washburne; and I hope that he will send me something from your mother. . . . You must arm yourself with patience in this matter, my Love, and wait till they choose to yield to facts. If they leave Paris, I hope they will bring the poor ponies with them, otherwise we shall probably never see them again.

Have you read Gambetta's proclamation? It is really going a bit too far: he is rivalling the imperial press now in lying. These people are incorrigible, and they want a severe lesson. By the way—the newspaper

reaches me very irregularly; this is very tiresome. Subscribe for it in my name and have it sent to me direct through the Field Post-Office, which is now acting in good order. Good night, Touti; I am going to bed now as I have to get up early to-morrow morning. I have to change my quarters again, and my new address will be in the Rue de Provence; it is a pretty little house and I shall be nearer to the Chancery. I will add a line to-morrow.

October 25 (*morning*)

Good morning, Touti. I forgot to tell you last night that Lehndorff had asked me to give you his compliments. He was furious at the very idea of Gräfin Perponcher and you starting for this place now that the roads are not safe; and he implored me not to allow you to do so. You see that all sensible people are of the same opinion. The weather looks as if it were going to get better, so that I shall be able to ride. You can't imagine how I look forward to this. To-morrow or the day after we hope to go to lunch at St. Germain, at the Pavillon Henri IV. What a pity you can't be of the party! . . .

VERSAILLES, *October* 24, 1870

Here is a line from your brother that I received to-day. It will show you that he is well. He sent it to me by a regimental doctor who has come over to make some purchases. It seems that he thought of coming himself, but gave up the idea so as not to leave the house unoccupied.

The latest news is that Schlettstadt has capitulated. It is said that Metz is on the point of doing the same, Bazaine's provisions being completely exhausted. It is certain at all events that a number of disasters are taking place now, which was not the case a short time

ago. This will mean a step in advance for us, but it is also the ruin of the Empire, which will fall definitely with Bazaine's army. I am not quite sure that it would not have been better for us to have preserved it.

I will try to get Stone's letter passed, and that for your mother also; but I shall have to open both of them, otherwise they would certainly not be forwarded.

Poor Ferdinand[1] Radziwill has received a bullet in the leg, but it is said to be nothing serious. Don't say anything to his wife about it yet; wait till she hears of it through Anton Radziwill.

We intend to lunch to-morrow at the Pavillon Henri IV. if the weather is fine enough, but Heaven knows if we shall be able to manage it. In any case the horses are ordered. It only takes forty minutes to get there, and it will be great fun. To-day I took a ride of two and a half hours on the Chestnut: this did me a lot of good.

I cannot make out the couriers, but I can state positively that I write every day, and that the courier takes my letters with him regularly. I made a mistake yesterday about the date, I think, and put 24th instead of 23rd.

I changed my quarters this morning and am very curious about my new bed. The apartment is very nice—a small *salon* with one window, another small room next to it, and then my bedroom—all the rooms looking out on to the garden. My servant lodges over me. The proprietor is a decent fellow, a magistrate; I think we shall get along very well together. August Maltzan has arrived, and I have been to see him. He doesn't look bad; he is quite cheerful, but has to remain very quiet in his bed. He is lodging in the same house as Pless, where he is very comfortable.

[1] Cousin of Prinz Anton Radziwill (cf. *supra*). Afterwards member of the Reichstag; now Lieut.-Colonel of the Reserve of the 1st Brandenburg Uhlans (Kaiser Alexander II. of Russia's).

It seems that the French had ten thousand men out the day before yesterday and a quantity of guns. They lost a good many. This war is becoming more and more bloody every day. It seems that our men in a hand-to-hand fight did not give any quarter at all. After having driven the French head over heels down a mountain, they hustled them up into a heap against a wall, where all the mischief took place. The engagement at Châteaudun was a most horrible and desperate one; the two sides fought in the streets and every house was taken by assault. One Bavarian battery behaved right well: when they had no more ammunition the officer said to his men—"If we remain quiet they will think we are afraid, let us sing them something!" So whilst the firing continued, they sang the "Wacht am Rhein."

I no longer receive the ghost of a newspaper. This is very tiresome. I beg of you to subscribe for it in my name and have it sent to me direct by the Field Post. Now I am going to say good night to you, my Touti, and am going to bed. It is late and I am tired. I shall add a line to-morrow morning. . . .

October 25 (9 *a.m.*)

I have just got up, and have begun my day by having a quarrel with my landlord, who would not allow a fire to be made in my bedroom on the plea that there are no dog-irons to my stove. No butter, no candles, and not enough blankets for my bed! I have just told him that I am very easily satisfied, but that he must not make any unnecessary difficulties, and that I intend to have a fire in five minutes. The dog-irons appeared as if by magic and the rest will follow. What a race of people! If I had not been polite enough yesterday to call upon the proprietor and to tell him that I should try to disturb him as little as possible; if I had simply given my orders like every-

body else, I should have been surrounded with attentions. But I was polite and declined all the food that I was entitled to demand—and this is the result! But now I shall treat them with a high hand, simply giving my orders without waiting for delay or explanation.

You see that I am in a rage; but it is really very tiresome to have to be obliged to fight for trifles when one has other things to do.

Good-bye. I hope to have a good long letter from you to-day. I don't know why, but I have an idea that this miserable war will not last much longer. There are no real reasons for my thinking so, but I believe so all the same. Perhaps it is a mistake, and one must not give oneself up to it. I laughed a good deal over your proposition that we should hire a little house with a garden in England. What should we do there? No: we two will go with the children to the banks of the Rhine, and will look about from village to village for a pretty little cot where we can put up. What do you say to that?

Good-bye, Touti, I shall be very much pleased when we get as far as that! . . .

VERSAILLES, *October* 25 1870

Here is a letter from your mother that Washburne sent me to-day, adding himself that she preferred to remain where she was *till he left.* As some letters are to be sent to Paris to-morrow, I have written again to her to press her strongly to leave Paris to-morrow and to bring your father, who wants to stop there, with her. I have written to Washburne again to beg him to use all his influence to induce her to do so. Heaven knows whether they will decide to leave! In any case I have obtained leave from Bismarck, and shall be myself at the outposts near Creteil on Thursday

morning to receive your mother if she arrives, and to conduct her to Petit Val if she prefers it. It is of course *impossible* to enable her to go from here to Dinard. She would have to go to Brussels first. . . .

I received this evening your letter of the 22nd, which pleased me greatly. Of course I will send the money to the Curé, and I will add two hundred francs out of my own pocket to make it a round sum. Why do you finish up your letter with a spiteful remark? I never said I was *fully* satisfied when I could ride. But it is my sole amusement, and I should certainly become ill if I could not have it. This is how I passed my day to-day, for example. At 10 a.m. I was here at the Chancery, and, with the exception of meal times and from 4–5.30, when I was able to go out riding, I have not had a moment to myself, and have been writing the greater part of the time. . . .

I am delighted that St. Priest is alive. Let us hope that his good luck will continue, and that this miserable war will be over some day. . . .

October 26 (9 *a.m.*)

Now I am up, and have got a day's business before me, which has to be finished so that I can be at Creteil to-morrow morning. It is possible, as the distance is very long, that I shall be obliged to leave this afternoon, in which case I shall certainly sleep at Petit Val to let your brother know of it. I should not then be able to send you a letter by to-morrow morning's courier; but you must not be anxious if you don't get a letter for a day. In fact don't be anxious at all. I am very prudent and shall go a long way round in order to reach Sucy by a road that is quite safe. . . .

VERSAILLES, *October* 27, 1870

As you did not receive a telegram, you will have concluded that I had nothing to tell you, and that your mother did not leave Paris to-day. I left here at 2.30 yesterday and arrived at Petit Val at 6 p.m. just in time for a simple dinner. I sat down to it with the three officers who are there just now. They are very amiable and nice.

Henry and I left this morning about eight o'clock in a carriage for Bonneuil, where we found Colonel von Neumann at the Château. I showed him an official commission in accordance with which we went off at once to the outposts.

After waiting for an hour, during which time we saw a balloon leave Paris, a white flag was hoisted, whereupon we advanced beyond a barricade on the road to Creteil. We found several French officers, amongst others Horace de Choiseul and M. de Béard; afterwârds about fifteen carriages drove up with the Russians and Americans, none of whom I knew except that good fellow Stone who was in ecstasies at being able to get away. Besides him, there were Mr. Hofmann[1] and Mr. Ward,[1] also Mr. Washburne's son, all of whom had come to hand over their compatriots to us, and on behalf of the Russians Obrescow (who is as deaf as a post); and besides them, Colonel Claremont,[2] but they did not leave the city. The three Americans told me that your father absolutely refused to leave yet, and that your mother could not make up her mind to go without him. They gave me the enclosed letter for you and another for Henry, who seized the opportunity for writing them a note in pencil begging them again to leave Paris. It seems that they have a number of people there belonging to Sucy who have nothing

[1] Secretaries of the United States Legation at Paris.
[2] Military Attaché to the British Ambassador at Paris.

to eat, and they are interested in them. They don't want to abandon them. . . .

By the way—I asked Horace Choiseul if he had any news of St. Priest: he says he is well. I sent him my compliments. All the Prussian and American gentlemen were unanimous in saying that living in Paris now is anything but pleasant. There is no movement in the streets, they say; but they have still got something to eat (60 grammes of meat a day per head). The absence of all news causes them a good deal of discomfort.

About two o'clock, when all the papers had been verified, the caravan moved on. We went back to Petit Val, and left again after having had some luncheon. I brought your brother with me: he is now sitting opposite to me. We arrived here about 7 p.m.: the others were still at dinner, and Bismarck told me to ask your brother to join us at table.

It was very funny then, for Bismarck amused himself by telling him some very terrible things, which made Henry jump in his chair. Bismarck was delighted with the effect that he produced and told still worse things. After dinner we went to the Hôtel du petit Vatel to see Mr. Corbin and his son, who left Paris yesterday. They are going to London. Both of them are pleased that they are out of Paris and cannot understand your father's obstinacy.

Still they have got everything they want, so you can set your mind at rest on this point. Mr. Hofmann dined with them on Sunday or Monday, and it seems they had an excellent dinner. Mr. Corbin was there for tea on Saturday, and they had butter and cream; and everything else was as it should be. Your mother writes to Henry that his father looks twenty years younger and that he is quite satisfied with his present condition. So you have no reason for being anxious. You must only be a little patient and wait till



Graf von Bismarck-Bohlen Lothar Bucher Abeken von Holstein
von Wartensleben Delbrück Graf von Bismarck Graf Paul Hatzfeldt von Keudell

GROUP OF GERMAN DIPLOMATISTS

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Washburne leaves the city. That is sure to be very soon.

To-day's great piece of news is the capitulation of Metz, which must have been signed this afternoon at five o'clock. It seems there are 150,000 men, twenty to thirty thousand of whom are sick or wounded. This will be a great blow for Paris, because we can thus dispose of our whole Metz army now, the greater part of which will come to join our troops here. It is an immense augmentation to our forces. It is to be hoped that this will hasten on the end of this abominable war. Nobody will be more delighted than I shall be. But I don't want a peace that will not give us all the guarantees that we require. If they are mad enough to refuse them, we shall have to wait and continue until their resistance has been entirely broken.

Why have I again received no letter from you by the courier who arrived this morning? This is very wrong, for I miss your letters when they don't come. . . . In your letter of yesterday (the 23rd) you complain of the damage done to the summer-house at Petit Val, and you pour out your lamentations over the ruins heaped up in the environs of Paris. Nothing would have happened to the summer-house if it had not been completely isolated and separated from the park and also uninhabited. Besides, it is impossible to know who did the damage. As for the devastations in the neighbourhood, the French began to act so, and our troops found nothing but deserted villages, empty houses and closed doors.

It is quite natural that after all the privations they have endured, and after having slept for nights in the open air, the soldiers should have burst in the doors and taken what was likely to render their existence a little more agreeable when they found the owners of the houses had fled. I am certainly not spiteful, but I should have done the same in a similar situation. . . .

October 28 (9.30 *a.m.*)

Henry has already gone out to buy some provisions and some wine for Petit Val. The officers have given him some money to purchase the things. He did a good thing for himself yesterday at the outposts—he got 300 francs out of Mr. Ward by a trick. He told him to get them paid back by his father, who I dare say will be in a fine state about it.

Mr. Stone is here with young Mr. Treble. He sends you all sorts of messages. I am going to inquire how he can get to Boulogne. . . .

VERSAILLES, *October* 28, 1870

Enclosed is a tolerably old letter from your mother (of the 17th October) and one from your brother that reached me to-day, brought by a messenger from M. Favre, who had an official mission. I send it on to you, as you will be glad to have it. I have hardly seen Henry to-day. He did some commissions; lunched with Mr. Corbin and his son; and left for Petit Val again at 2.30 p.m. I have had a good deal to do. At four o'clock I was able to go for a ride, which did me some good. After dinner (which lasted at least two hours) I went to see Mr. Stone, who is staying with M. Pescatore. He doesn't know exactly what to do, as he can't go direct to Boulogne and has got three carriages and eight horses, belonging to friends in England, on his hands. He is inclined to remain quietly here (so that the anxiety about his daughter was not very great), but I have warned him that he will have some difficulty here in feeding all his horses. The Corbins and Mr. Wiehof have arrived. We went to see M. Pescatore and that detained me till 10 p.m. The result is that I have been obliged to work till midnight and that I have still not

been able to finish all that ought to leave to-morrow for Paris and with the courier for London.

No letter from you to-day, nor yesterday either. The courier missed the train somewhere on the way and won't arrive till to-morrow. This is a nuisance. . . . I suppose there were illuminations this evening in honour of the surrender of Metz. There ought to have been. We have been greatly deceived about the garrison at Metz. We always estimated it at 80,000 men at most, whereas there were 173,000—more than twice as many as what we thought. It is incredible that no means of getting out could have been found with an army of that size and good generals. I offered to bet that before three days the Paris newspapers will say that we *bribed* Bazaine to *betray* the army. They know now the fact of the surrender, because our officers at the outposts took good care to pass on the news to their French colleagues.

They won't like to hear that our Metz army is now free to come here. Let us hope that this will hurry on the end of the drama which is beginning to get too long. The caravans from Paris continue to pass. I expect to see Khevenhüller[1] and Hübner, Woodhouse,[2] Claremont and a number of Englishmen in two or three days. I have the pleasure of doing all this correspondence, and all these people ought to erect a statue in my honour in return for the trouble they are giving me, and for the goodwill that I am showing. More than one of them would have had a good deal of difficulty if I had not turned things in their favour. But I am not such a fool as to reckon on their gratitude. I think I told you that your friend St. Priest is well. I shall certainly hear some details about Paris from Khevenhüller if, as I hope, he comes this way. . . .

[1] Graf von Khevenhüller, Secretary to the Embassy of Austria-Hungary in Paris, now Ambassador there.

[2] First Secretary of the British Embassy at Paris, Chargé d'Affaires.

VERSAILLES, *October* 31, 1870

You will have been disappointed at not getting a letter from me yesterday. It is the first time that I have allowed a day to pass without writing to you and it was not my fault. The day before yesterday I was told that the courier would now leave at noon; so, being very tired, I put off writing till yesterday morning. But at 9 a.m. the Minister sent for me. I dressed as quickly as possible and found M. Thiers at his rooms. He was handed over to me so that I should arrange for his journey to Paris (don't say anything about this yet if it has not already been announced in the newspapers). All this took up time. We were at the General Staff and afterwards at the Hôtel des Reservoirs where he asked me to lunch with him and M. Cochery and M. de Remusat, who were with him. He left about 1 p.m. with an officer, and of course it was then too late for the post.

This little expedition interested me very much as you may well imagine. M. Thiers has aged and has a tired expression. He told me he had been *en route* for forty days and that he had slept very little. But all the same he woke up again at luncheon and his real nature came out. He told me a whole heap of anecdotes. On his way he had met a French peasant with whom he entered into conversation. Finally he told the peasant his name, and the man did not even know who M. Thiers was. Just imagine how his vanity was wounded!

We didn't discuss politics at all, but every moment he let it be understood that he and his friends had never wished for war, and M. de Remusat and M. Cochery joined in as chorus. He gave Victor Hugo a nice little smack. The conversation turned on his letters, which they said were detestable from every point of view. I pretended to be astonished, saying

that I had always thought he was the first poet in France and that he spoke an admirable language—to which M. Thiers replied:—

"The result of having M. Hugo as first poet and M. Lebœuf as our War Minister is, that we have the pleasure of lunching with you here; you will not be offended with me for saying that this would have been more agreeable under other circumstances."

I answered by saying that I hoped to lunch at some other time with him in the Place St. Georges. The whole time we were at lunch the Landwehr marched past under our window, and I think he was much pleased at seeing the troops. We separated on very friendly terms, and I hope he will have arrived at Paris without any accident, and without having met M. Flourens, into whose hands he did not at all want to fall.

After dinner I received your letter of the 26th (with the cigarettes, etc.). I was very pleased with the letter and took the one addressed to Mr. Stone to him. As he was at dinner with M. Pescatore I had it taken in to him and waited in his room. All of a sudden he burst in like a bomb, with his eyes full of tears, threw himself on my neck, kissed me, and then, before I could prevent him, as I was so overwhelmed,—he kissed my hand! You would have laughed! The letter contained the news of his daughter's safe confinement: she is progressing well. He was quite mad with joy and said he would have been ready to give 100,000 francs for this letter. I was on the point of replying—"Oh! don't hesitate to do so!"

By the way, please tell Bancroft,[1] if you can, that I was able to get young Mr. Treble, in whom he is interested, out of Paris. He is now here, and is leaving either with the courier, or with another American to

[1] Minister of the United States in Berlin.

whom Mr. Stone will confide him, *viâ* Belgium to Berlin. Write him a line.

We rode to Marly in the course of the day. There is a splendid view from the aqueduct over Paris. Do you remember the excursion we two made there?

The day before yesterday there was a tolerably sharp engagement at Le Bourget (near St. Denis). We took a few hundred prisoners including about twenty officers. But Waldersee's brother, who had only just recovered from his first wound, was killed. The King is very sad about it. I was with him last night.

Don't excite yourself, my Touti, about the summer-house. . . . I have asked Tresckow to send a copy of the King's order to Colonel Neumann, who will have it stuck up on all the gates of the property. I think this is a good idea. I gave another letter for your mother to Peter Wittgenstein, who arrived yesterday and is going to Paris. She will perhaps send me a reply by Thiers. I have asked her to send me the ponies by Wittgenstein when he leaves the city, if she does not care to keep them. . . .

Poor Gräfin Perponcher! I haven't said a word to her husband, who certainly knows nothing about it, as he was in a very good humour. . . .

VERSAILLES, *November* 1, 1870

I received your letter of the 28th; it gave me great pleasure. It is very tiresome to have to leave you quite alone in your present condition, and I would give a great deal to be with you. But one must not think of oneself at a time like this when it is a question of the existence of nations, and when so many poor people are overwhelmed with grief and suffering. After all, one must admit that in comparison with them we have only to put up with a little inconvenience. Besides, one must always hope that there will soon be

an end to all this; and that the madmen, who are still at the head of the Government at Paris, will become more reasonable or will be forced to become so, so that we can all go home again. I need hardly tell you, little Love, that I shall be delighted when that day comes. I am already thinking of the arrangements that we shall be able to make, especially for next summer, and for our little journey when we shall look out for the cottage I am dreaming of on the banks of the Rhine; or anywhere else if you prefer it, except in France, for one must not deceive oneself—living in France for the next few years will not be pleasant for Germans. A good deal of time must elapse in order to let the hatred and malice and all uncharitableness of the population calm down; for they will not forgive us either our victories or the devastation that was begun by their own Government. Even Henry, who has done all he could for the few inhabitants of Sucy who remained behind in the village, is quite sure that his position will be untenable because of the good relations he has had with the officers. All the kindness he has shown the inhabitants will later on be forgotten.

I bet Bismarck-Bohlen a hundred francs yesterday that M. Thiers would return. He said he wouldn't, because he would not be allowed to leave Paris again. He had to pay the money, for M. Thiers returned last evening. It appears that he is so tired, that he has asked to be allowed to rest till to-day. After dinner I had to go to the Hôtel des Reservoirs to see somebody, and was on the point of asking the waiter to tell me the number of the room when a door opened and I heard M. Thiers' voice saying—

"Is not that M. de *Asfeldt's* voice that I hear?"

I could not avoid going into his room for a moment. He had a worn-out expression; his hands were very hot, and he coughed a good deal. He told me there

had been a council of ministers the night before last which lasted from 10 p.m. to three o'clock the next morning, and that he had to get up again at eight to receive a number of people. Almost without intending to do so he added that "there had been a little excitement in Paris." I am quite sure that he is very glad to have got out of the city safe and sound!

As for the negotiations that he is going to conduct here, I don't attach much importance to them just yet. These people are not yet persuaded that they have been defeated, and their vanity cannot yet resign itself to defeat.

Did you see Gambetta's proclamation about the capitulation of Metz, in which he says that if it is true, it can only be the result of a crime, the author of which should be outlawed? This is a good pendant to the accusations brought against Général Uhrich, who so bravely defended Strassburg. One doesn't know whether it is more ridiculous or more disgusting; and one cannot really understand how there are still honourable men to be found ready to serve such a country and to expose themselves to such ingratitude.

Mr. Stone is still here and has no desire to go away now that he is at ease about his daughter. Little Treble leaves to-morrow, doubtless with another American who is travelling in his own carriage. Enclosed is a letter from him to his mother which I beg you to forward to her immediately, as she is sure to be anxious. Mr. Corbin is also still here with his son But they are leaving soon for Belgium and London, and are thinking of stopping a day at Petit Val. All of them send you their compliments.

I have received advices from Düsseldorf saying that the money has been sent to Berlin. You ought to have received it by now. As for the money you intend to give the Curé of Sucy, I advise you to wait, and Henry is of the same opinion. Nothing can be done

there just now with money, so it is better to wait till after the conclusion of peace, when it can be divided. I hope you have calmed yourself about the summer-house. Henry himself does not know who did the damage. But after all there was not much damage done; there was merely a strip of silk torn from a sofa. As for your cow, that is another thing; and Henry ought not to have let it be there. It is very funny that just now he has more cows and horses than he had at the beginning. There were two cows, I think, and three horses, and now there are three cows and five horses. It seems that they are to be found in the woods if one looks for them. It will be heart-rending for your father to see his kitchen-garden wall pierced by loopholes! They have had to be made in case of an attack; and the same has been done in other walls in the neighbourhood—at Piple and elsewhere. The effect is curious. They can all be stopped up again, however, if necessary. . . .

VERSAILLES, *November* 2, 1870

I received your lines of the 29th last night. As I was occupied up to midnight, I could not go to see Herr Braun at the Château, but I will do so this morning and will send you word about him for Mlle. Jenny.[1] Please give her all sorts of kind messages from me. Yesterday I received the enclosed letter from your mother, in which she tells me twice that she will leave Paris and twice that she won't! The other letter, from Washburne, says that she will wait till he goes. Mr. Ward sent me word at the same time by the officer of the outposts to say that they will leave to-morrow (Thursday). I don't know what I am to understand. I can't be always going to Creteil, for that occupies two days each time. So I have written to Henry, who

[1] Dame de compagnie of Gräfin Bismarck.

is in the neighbourhood, to tell him to be on the look-out. He is on very good terms with the officers who are in command of the outposts at Creteil, and could easily receive information at once if they leave the city, so as to be able to make all the necessary arrangements.

But I don't believe they intend to leave, especially as they now imagine that the Powers are going to intervene in favour of France! People are quite incorrigible in this country. Do you suppose that here at Versailles anybody is willing to believe that Metz has really capitulated? I went to Marly yesterday; the view of Paris from there is splendid. One could distinctly see the French soldiers on Mont Valérien. Unfortunately it was very windy, so that my poor Chestnut got a severe chill. This is very annoying.

I have no particular news to tell you. Mme. de Gallifet has asked Bismarck to allow her to leave Paris in order to join her husband at Wiesbaden, and he has given her permission to do so. Do you remember Mme. Manora, Mme. de Baulaincourt's friend, who was engaged to Nostitz? She wrote me a most beseeching letter, and I put in a word at a favourable moment and got the same permission for her too. I am writing to the two of them to-day through Washburne, and will send him a letter to your mother at the same time. M. Thiers is here, but I know absolutely nothing about his business. I need not tell you how glad I should be if his mission were successful. . . .

VERSAILLES, *November* 3, 1870

I received your nice long letter of the 30th last night and was much pleased with it. I assure you that I can put up with my annoyances here a hundred times better, when I see by your letters that you and the

children are well and that you are brave and in a good temper. This is very essential for me. But when I receive irritable letters from you showing me that you are impatient, I get a counter-blow and that makes me irritable for several days. You must not forget that it is no fun to be here, often overwhelmed with business and annoyances, not knowing how long things may go on like this, whilst the only thing that can give me the necessary patience is to be certain that you are quite well.

I forgot to tell you that I had the courage to ask General Moltke on my own responsibility for permission to let poor Mademoiselle leave Paris as she is so very afraid of being killed by our bombs. He gave the permission, but I don't know whether she will take advantage of it as she is perhaps still more afraid of our soldiers. She probably thinks they eat little children quite raw!

Keudell went to see Herr Braun, Mlle. Jenny's protégé, but he was not able to see him because he is in the same room as the officers who are severely wounded. His wounds are slight and he will be able to get out in about a fortnight. Keudell has written all this to Mlle. Jenny. He will be asked to-day if he wants anything; and if he does, they will see that he gets it.

Mr. Stone came to see me this morning. He hopes to leave to-morrow for Rouen and to go on to England from there. Mr. Corbin has left for St. Germain with his son and will also go to England from there. If you will send me some cigarettes, my Touti, I shall be very much pleased. And you might just send me also some good things to eat and drink. Ask Hugo to go to Borchardt to see what there is. We should like a very good *pâté de foie gras*, very fresh and *en croûte*. Some bottles of good Cape wine or Malaga or Madeira would also be received with pleasure.

There is a liqueur called "Allash" that we are very fond of drinking at luncheon, but can't get here! . . .

VERSAILLES, *November* 4, 1870

I received your letter of the 31st last night and the one for the Curé Roche, containing three hundred francs. This note of yours is *very well* written and I compliment you on it. You know that that is worth something, considering I am not too prodigal in my praise.

As soon as I go to Petit Val—probably very soon—I will take the letter myself to the Curé and will add two hundred francs to it, but I will leave it to him to await the end of the war for distributing the money. From what Henry tells me all the honest people have fled, and scarcely any but the good-for-nothings of Sucy have remained. It would therefore perhaps be better to wait till the others have returned, for they will be in great need of assistance then. . . .

I think I told you that I had obtained permission for poor Mademoiselle to leave Paris. This looks as if it were a matter of no importance: but it is all the same. The time may come any moment when *nobody* will be allowed to leave, except of course those who have already received permission. . . .

The guns are silent on the days fixed for the departure of strangers, and everything passes off in the most peaceful manner possible.

Did you see in your mother's letter the list of all the persons she wants to take with her? I have several times written to her that she would not be able to bring any French people away; but I might just as well whistle. If she persists in trying to bring them out, I think they will all be stopped at the outposts. They can't yet understand that we are living in time of war —a war of extermination that the French have pro-

voked; and that people cannot travel under the same conditions as they do in time of peace!

Mr. Stone left this morning for London. I went to see him last night, and found him much pleased at your having telegraphed to his daughter. . . .

We had splendid weather yesterday, but cold. Winter has certainly come on. If this continues, you will have to send me a fur coat. These mad Parisians appear to want us to pass the winter here. It is really stupid. . . .

VERSAILLES, *November* 5, 1870

I got no letter from you yesterday, as the courier missed the train at Nancy I think. I was very sorry. The day was a long one in every way. I had to work, and did scarcely anything, as I didn't feel well. I had a heavy feeling in the head.

Although I was very sleepy, I went for a ride with Bismarck-Bohlen; the weather was fine but cold and we returned a little after five. It was very nice in the park, especially where we saw the sun. In the avenue that opens on to the Grand Trianon, there was a whole regiment of officers to whom the Crown Prince was distributing the Iron Cross. Whilst this was going on an enormous balloon coming from Paris passed almost over our heads. It was the second to-day. It is said that the first one was captured somewhere or other by our troops, but I don't know if this is true.

If I can find an envelope large enough, I will send you a photograph of the Palace of Versailles which will be of interest for later years because the black and white flag of our sentinels is flying over it. This morning we were all at the photographer's, with the exception of the Minister, and we tried to have a group taken. I don't know if it will turn out a success. If it is not too bad, I will send you one. The photographer

has no paper just now. When he has some, I will have a photograph of myself taken as souvenir of this enchanting visit, and will send you a copy.

You will be rather surprised I think to see Keudell at your house! He is starting for Berlin to-day on private business, the Minister having given him twelve days' leave, and he will pass one or two days of it at Berlin. He will tell you that we are all pretty well in health, but that it is not always very amusing here and that we shall all be very glad when the day arrives for the conclusion of peace. M. Thiers is still here, but I don't know whether there is any chance of success. I think that personally he is very anxious for peace, but I don't know whether he has sufficient influence on the so-called Governments of Tours and Paris, and the latter is also too exposed to the influence of the street for its existence and authority to be very secure. All this is very sad, because it may keep us here for a long time and the population of Paris will finally be the victim of it. . . .

The Paris Government now fixes the days for the departure of strangers, as this interferes with their military movements, for they cannot fire whilst the people are proceeding to the outposts. I will send you news as soon as I hear anything.

By order of the Minister, Bismarck-Bohlen went this morning to the ambulance to ask Herr Braun if he wanted anything. Tell this to Mlle. Jenny with my best compliments. . . .

VERSAILLES, *November* 5, 1870

Your letter of the 1st arrived this morning. It was a day longer on the way than usual. There is still a letter of the 2nd missing. Nothing annoys me so much as the irregularity of the post, which of course is not to blame. It is astonishing that, although we are in a

foreign country and although there are so many difficulties to surmount, the letters arrive as quickly and regularly as they do. I was a little bit unwell to-day, but you need not be anxious. I sometimes get this sort of thing. . . . We live far too well here, and that isn't very good for me. For example, yesterday evening we were 2½ hours at table—from 5.30 to 8! You will be surprised when I come home to see what an appetite I have and to see what I drink now! Formerly you thought I ate and drank a good deal, now you would be horrified and would turn your head away.

No news from Paris. Neither the English nor the Austrians, Mme. de Gallifet nor anybody else has arrived up to now. It is probable that they will come out to-morrow, because up to now it was always on Thursdays that foreigners were allowed to go out. . . . Herr Braun asked for some cigars which were to be sent to him to-day. I sent off Mlle. Jenny's letter at once, as I am told he is to be taken to Germany to-morrow.

M. Thiers is still here; and I don't know when he thinks of leaving again for Tours. I know nothing at all about the negotiations, but from what I do know about the condition of things and of prevailing feeling, I have not much hope. You will have seen in your mother's last letter that they are now dreaming at Paris of an intervention of the Powers in their favour! By cherishing illusions of this kind they shut their eyes to facts; so that there is no way of putting an end to the war. . . . To-morrow morning I will add a line.

November 6 (9 *a.m.*)

. . . Yesterday I had a little talk with my landlord and you would have laughed heartily if you had heard us. The housekeeper sent me word that there was no more sugar, wood, etc. This irritated me, so I replied

that I had had enough of their nonsense and would leave the house, but would send twenty common soldiers in my place! The landlord ran after me to beg me to remain, laying all the blame on his wife, who, it appears, is a cracked old thing. Of course I allowed myself to be persuaded to yield.

I hope to-day to be able to obtain for Le Sourd the permission he asked for to go to Switzerland. He will have to give his parole to remain quiet as long as war lasts. If I succeed I will take the news myself to his mother. Poor old lady! she will be very pleased. . . .

It is a pure invention that the King has been fired at; but, between ourselves, sufficient precautions are not taken for his safety.

VERSAILLES, *November* 7, 1870

I did not leave my room yesterday so as to completely get over my indisposition. . . .

Something seems to have happened to the couriers, but I do not understand what it is. . . .

If Marie Kalergis has made a vow not to listen to any music before the end of the war, I am afraid she will be obliged to wait some time longer. I can't see any end to all this, unless those who are sensible at Paris and Tours start a revolution themselves and hang the members of the Government. Unfortunately there is little hope of this, for in times like these the sensible people hide themselves and are quite satisfied if they are not hanged by the *canaille*.

Fifty years hence, when there will be a desire to write a serious history of this war, real historians will have a great deal of trouble to get at the bottom of things; and above all to make the world comprehend the folly of the French Government, which is ruining the country for several generations, knowing full well,

as they must, that its defeat is only a question of time.

A moment's reflection must show that the undisciplined and badly armed bands that are called the army of the Loire, and the army of that poor fool Garibaldi, are incapable of struggling against a regular army; and that Prince Friedrich Karl with his army of more than 200,000 men can march over the whole of France, from north to south and from east to west, driving all these creatures before him, pillaging the country as he chooses. It is also equally clear that the provisions of Paris, however considerable in quantity they were at the commencement, must be exhausted one of these days, and it is not even denied that they are already sensibly diminishing in quantity. The garrison could try to make some sorties which would result in the loss of a good deal of blood on both sides; but there is no chance whatever of their being able to force us to raise the siege of the city.

Only the other day there was a bit of an excitement and the Government was in a most critical situation for several hours. This will occur again when the masses, whom they have had the folly to provide with weapons, begin to feel the pangs of hunger. There will be fighting within the town, and the difficulties of defence will be thereby enhanced. On our side we can confine ourselves, if we choose, to awaiting quietly the course of events and to retaining our positions round the city. The winter will cause no change. The climate is not very rigorous and there are villages and other places of refuge; besides, the troops will be provided with furs and warm garments.

So it is only a question of time, and Paris must inevitably fall one of these days. But there will be a difference if, instead of treating for peace in a sensible manner, they choose to wait till they are reduced to extremities. We shall then have before us a city in

ruins and a population of two millions, all starving, who will clamour for bread, which we shall not be in a position to give them. If there are any of them left, the people who are better off will perhaps find means to save themselves and to reach other places where they will obtain food by getting beyond the circle round Paris that is quite devastated; but the greater part of the population will see itself given over, without any means of escape, to all the horrors of famine.

This is the inevitable result of the policy of the Government, which calls itself "the Government of national defence"! Of course there are some people of talent and sense amongst them who thoroughly appreciate what the future is likely to be. The Government ought therefore to say to themselves that in the eyes of posterity they will have to bear the responsibility of all that is likely to happen; and that the whole country will one day curse them for all these incalculable misfortunes. They would not spare the country just because they wanted to hold the power they had picked up in the streets for a few weeks longer.

I have just been interrupted by M. Cochery, one of M. Thiers' aides-de-camp, who detained me for some time.

There is no news from Henry or your parents. If M. Thiers had not come, I am convinced they would have left already; his arrival has made people in Paris think that peace would be concluded or that there will be at least an armistice. It is to be hoped they will decide now. If I can, I will go to Petit Val in the course of the week to see how things are going on there. . . . Good-bye—it is 11.30. I have only just time to send my letter to the office to catch the courier. . . . Perhaps this war will finish sooner than we think at this moment. . . .

VERSAILLES, *November* 8, 1870

I must limit myself unfortunately to a few lines to-day. Since early this morning I have had people here the whole time, especially Germans who left their families in Paris and are asking to have them got out. These good people think that it is necessary to tell one their whole family history. As you know me, you will understand how it is that I cannot bring myself to tell them that all this is useless. The last one has just gone, and I have given orders that nobody else shall be admitted so that I can write to you. . . .

To-morrow or the day after, the bag containing the despatches that Washburne sends every week to London will arrive, and he is certain to send me a line giving me news of your parents. He is really very kind and obliging in this matter.

If you think we are having fine weather here, you make a mistake. The sky is still of the same dirty grey colour, but it is perhaps a little less cold than at Berlin. I envy you for being able to go to see the pictures. Since I have been here I have only been able to go to the Versailles galleries once. I hope to go again very soon. I don't think of buying any pictures just now. Perhaps I will do so when I have got my own little cottage!

I haven't seen Lehndorff for an age, and haven't yet given him your compliments. I only know that he is terribly bored here like everybody else who has nothing to do. He still limps and can only walk with difficulty. He can't get on horseback, and this is a great trial to him. . . .

VERSAILLES, *November* 7, 1870
(*evening*)

My letter had just left this morning when Washburne's despatches arrived, amongst which were the enclosed letters from your mother—one for you, the

other addressed to me. A parcel left our office at the same time for Washburne, but unfortunately I knew nothing about it so that I could not send a letter with it to your mother. . . .

To-morrow or the day after I shall have an opportunity of writing her a letter in which I shall tell her the truth in serious language. It is to be hoped that this will make them comprehend the real situation. Besides, I must tell your mother not to take upon herself the forwarding of the correspondence of all her friends and acquaintances. I have been *strictly* forbidden to let any letter enter Paris or to send on one coming from there, and I should expose myself to the greatest annoyance with the military authorities if I were to do so. . . .

November 9 (*morning*)

I told you yesterday that I risked all sorts of annoyances by sending on a letter, especially when it is meant to go to one of the provinces occupied by the French. So I cannot forward a letter from Dr. Despaux to his wife. You should send it *viâ* London and let him get the answer through your mother. The only thing to do is for you to write to Mme. Despaux *viâ* London, to tell her that her husband is well and to ask her to write *to you also viâ London* how she and her husband are. *I* could then have this information told to Despaux, as I would mention it in a letter to Paris to your mother or to Washburne, and shall be delighted to render him this service. You must send your letter to London and Raymond will put it into an envelope and post it so that there is no German stamp or postmark on it; and Mme. Despaux must address her reply in an envelope to Raymond. I hope you will understand this, for it is very important not to make a mistake.

Raymond is in London, is he not? . . .

. . . For some days I have not heard a single cannon-shot. This is very extraordinary. The forts are not giving us the usual morning and evening serenade. We conclude that they are going to do something special and that we shall have a little sortie. I think our troops will be glad of this because they are rather bored at having nothing to do.

Two balloons have been caught with five persons in them and of course a quantity of letters and newspapers. It seems that all five of them will be brought before a council of war and that they will be lucky if they are not shot. This seems hard, but an end must be put to little games of this kind; and it is in accordance with the laws of war, because to pass the lines in a balloon is not allowed any more than on foot without a permit.

I laughed a good deal at your mother's anger against us because of the library at Strassburg. It is not our fault that Strassburg is a fortress, and that it was defended to the very last. We should have been delighted to have been able to preserve the library. This reminds me that one day a great personage who was interested in the cathedral at Strassburg thought that it was being menaced by the bombardment, and I had to speak to the General Staff about the matter to see if it were possible to spare it. I received the following answer:—"We cannot give up the bombardment, because it is the only way of taking the fortress; and we must have it at any price. But, in order to please the personage in question, we will give orders that the cannon balls shall be wrapped in cotton-wool!" As Henry is always saying—"War is war!" Besides, this has been turned into a war of extermination, and we are forced to be much more prudent and consequently to take much more vigorous measures.

I can quite understand your finding it dull and that Berlin must be horrible, asyou say in your letter of

the 5th that arrived yesterday. But I don't think it is any better at Versailles. I assure you that we civilians often hear of military events, at least the details of them, through the Berlin newspapers. This seems incredible, but it is so. There is only one remedy against feeling bored, and that is to be very much occupied; that is why you should give yourself some regular and continuous occupation. If I hadn't a lot to do here, I assure you I should die of ennui. . . .

VERSAILLES, *November* 9, 1870
(9 *a.m*)

I have begun my day this morning in a curious way. You remember the scenes I have had with my landlord, and especially with his wife, because they refused to give my valet wood, sugar and candles. At first they seemed to be more sensible and the wife even brought herself to purchase some candles. Just now I was fast asleep when I was woke up on hearing the words—"M. le Comte! M. le Comte!" I jumped up with a start and saw my landlady at the door. I asked what was the matter. "Help! help! your servant is beating my husband!" I jumped out of bed and called for my valet, telling him to come up at once. When he came, he told me that he had wanted to take some wood and that the landlord had called him names: he tried to pass by him with the wood, when the other struck him with his fist. He returned the blows and the wife arrived and bit and scratched him!

Bored by all this and not knowing who was in the right, I have sent for one of our police-lieutenants and have put the matter into his hands. The landlord has asked to be allowed to speak to me: he will put on a fine face when he sees the police arrive to receive him. You know that I am too good-natured to talk to him about any serious row. If my valet is in the wrong, he will have to bear the consequence; but this kind of

thing can't go on. If there is no change, I shall have to go into another apartment, and that would be annoying. . . .

Yesterday I received an old letter from your mother which had been to London and only reached me now. It will interest you because it gives a description of their life at the commencement of the siege, so I will send it to you. I don't understand at all how this letter got out, and how it went to London. I think I shall have an opportunity to-morrow to write a line to your mother, and I will tell her that she must make up her mind to leave Paris soon. The military authorities are very indignant that so many people are allowed to leave, so that one fine day no more permissions will be given, and I shall have a great deal of difficulty in obtaining an exception. Just imagine your father with his hatred of the "reds" persisting in remaining in a town where such things happen—where the "reds" shut up all the members of the Government for a whole day; and where the interference of the Ga de Nationale is necessary to set them at liberty! . . .

It is fearfully cold in my room: I can scarcely write, as my fingers are frozen. . . . The weather is horrible, and I expect our "*bons bourgeois*," who are on duty on the ramparts of Paris, disguised as soldiers of the Garde Nationale, are not very comfortable. Sapristi! I wish this war were over! . . .

VERSAILLES, *November* 11, 1870

I see I forgot to enclose your mother's letter yesterday, therefore do so now.

As I foresaw, the military authorities won't let anybody else quit Paris. They are not wrong, for it has been proved that foreigners, in whom confidence was placed, have taken advantage of this confidence for taking letters and information with them. So nobody else will be allowed to leave the city except those who

have already received permission; and they will have to hurry themselves. As your father and mother were not named, I asked for express permission for them, and it has been given. I am writing to them to-day to tell them they must leave Paris at once if they have not made up their minds to share the lot of those who will remain there until the end. I hope this will force them to come to a decision and that they will arrive without delay, for the time may come when no exceptions whatever will be made.

I have a very complicated piece of work to do this morning which has to be done at once, so you must not be angry if I only write a line. Your letter of the 7th reached me yesterday. I am looking forward to all the good things you say you are sending; but don't send too much, my little pet, especially not too much wine, as we have a good deal of that here. I am still very abstemious. For the first time since my illness I took some Champagne yesterday.

I am quite well again and have only got a little cold like everybody else in consequence of the sudden change of temperature. It snowed all day yesterday and one might have thought one was at Berlin. Last night Mont Valérien roared like a madman between two and three o'clock in the morning. . . .

VERSAILLES, *November* 13, 1870

I can't keep my promise to write you a long letter this morning. After having worked all day yesterday like a nigger getting ready the letters for Washburne, who has got permission to leave Paris, I had to add something this morning, and I am in a hurry to go to the Chancery to send the things off. This will take up a long time because there are a number of lists and letters to copy, and if I am not there it will last till this evening.

Last night I went to see the Curtises at the Hôtel des

Reservoirs to ask them if they wished to get their son out and to put him in that case on the list. They are very comfortable in an apartment with a separate entrance and a kitchen; and they have their servants and cook with them. This is what your mother should do when she leaves Paris.

I put the names of Mr. and Mrs. Moulton, Mlle. de Wissembourg and their servants on the list myself. I hope they will take advantage of this at once. Besides these, I obtained permission from the Minister for Mme. de Liadères, which is what your mother seemed to desire, and for Mme. de Béthisy's gardener, whom she wanted to send to Bressoix.

The military authorities will be furious at all these exceptions. It is lucky that this business is in my hands; for if one of my colleagues had had to look after it, nothing like so many people would have obtained the desired permission.

But it is also the last opportunity for getting it, so one must hurry oneself, because the time may come when the military authorities will hermetically close the gates.

I will now write a letter to your mother, and will tell her the plain and unvarnished truth.

Here are two letters that she sent me recently, one from Auber[1] for your sister-in-law, and the other for Charles. I send them on to you with the request that you won't speak about them. I have opened the letter to Charles, which is so full of details that I should be exposed to the greatest annoyance if I were to forward it to him. And to crown all—they give my address for the answer! I advise you to keep the letter, and to write yourself to Charles just a portion of the contents of the letter—that part which refers to their health and

[1] Daniel François Esprit Auber, the celebrated French composer; born 29th January, 1782; from 1842–70 Director of the Paris Conservatoire. Died 13th May, 1871.

such private matters. As for Auber's letter, it is at least of no importance, so you can do what you like with it. But it would be well in any case to wait a little before sending it off to London. . . .

VERSAILLES, *November* 13, 1870
(*morning*)

Yesterday evening I went to bed earlier than usual and yet I could not get up early. The fact was I put myself into a terrible rage, the result of which was that I hardly closed my eyes. When I came home I found my scamp of a servant blind drunk. It is his duty to open the door for me at night; but I had to wait till the maid got up to do so. You can imagine my rage. This morning he came to beseech me to pardon him, swearing it should not occur again. I replied that if he was drunk again one single time, I would turn him out immediately. This would be inconvenient for me, because it is almost impossible to get anybody, and under present conditions I can't take a Frenchman.

Our letter-bag for Washburne only leaves to-day, as the work was not finished last night. So your mother can't get my letter before this evening or to-morrow morning. If she decides to leave Paris, the French Government will have to fix a day beforehand, and this takes up time, so that she can't get out for several days.

We spent our morning yesterday receiving presents and good things for eating and drinking. I received the larks, and also a box containing *pâtés de foie gras*, geese and wine, and handed them all over to the common store just as did the others with their things. Thanks for all these things: they gave me great pleasure. Last night at dinner we had good Sauerkraut from Magdeburg for the first time. This was very gratifying to our German stomachs. I propose

bringing out a *pâté de foie gras* to-morrow to eat with it. This will be delicious.

I received your nice letters of the 8th and 9th last night and was much pleased with them. I really don't know why you think I don't like your writing affectionate and loving letters. On the contrary, I like them very much; but you know that, unfortunately, I can't write this kind myself. I am looking forward just as much as you are to the end of this war, and to the happiness of being re-united to you and the children; and my greatest pleasure will be to be able to establish a little home in the country where we can live quietly at least for part of the year. These constant separations are very disagreeable and one must look forward to a change.

. . . I will spend all my free time with you and the remainder of the time I could come and go whenever I could get a few days' holiday. I am sure you would be pleased, wouldn't you? As for me, I don't ask for anything better. . . .

VERSAILLES, *November* 13, 1870
(*Sunday, eleven o'clock*)

After a deal of work our parcel of letters for Washburne left to-day at four o'clock for the General Staff, and they will send it off presumably to-morrow morning to the French outposts. . . .

There are some reasons for supposing that people are beginning to get a glimpse of the truth at Paris. The day before yesterday one of our outpost officers, whilst venturing to advance a little too far, surprised an Englishman in a house reading the *Figaro* of the 11th, which of course he took and brought away with him. There was an article in this paper, taken from *La France*—very well written and very sensible—entitled, if I am not mistaken, "Are we lost?" (*Sommes nous perdus?*). The writer explains in a very frank manner

that Paris cannot defend herself alone if the army of the Loire, which seems to be a myth, does not come to her assistance; that the supply of fresh meat is nearly exhausted, and that people are already reduced to eating salt meat; that the army, much inferior as a whole and in regard to discipline to the German army, can still prevent the enemy from taking Paris, but cannot, without assistance, force him to raise the siege; that if the Government expects serious assistance from the provinces, they must say so and continue their resistance, but that if this is not the case, Paris ought to treat on her own account now when she can still obtain honourable conditions.

I saw to-day a line from Wittgenstein to old Koutousoff: he says he thinks he will leave Paris in a few days. I still hope he will bring the ponies with him if they have not already been made into cutlets. The weather was very fine to-day, so we had a good ride. I rode the Chestnut for the first time after his indisposition and I hope he has suffered no harm. We rode through the park and skirted the Petit Trianon, and at last found a road leading direct to Marly-le-Roi. As soon as we arrived there, I recognised the place at once. It was there where we got out of our carriages the day we made the famous excursion with the Sagans to Marly. Do you remember? There is a large basin of water and above, a kind of terrace. From there, after a glance at Mont Valérien, we rode straight to the aqueduct which you must remember too, and we returned by Roquencourt. This ride did me a great deal of good, and I got home as ravenous as a wolf!

Despite your good advice I could not restrain myself from taking a good meal. This was our menu:—a kind of soup thickened with herbs, *poulet aux champignons* and rice, *spickgans* (smoked goose-breast), *aux chouxfleurs*, *pâté de foie gras*, roast venison and salad, roast chestnuts, cheese and butter, dessert. As drinks

we had Vienna beer, Bordeaux, champagne and port; and with our coffee we drank Kirsch which Pourtalès had sent us.

I trust you will not pity us for the privations war imposes upon us. If only I had the stomach of my illustrious chief (*i.e.* Bismarck)! He partook of soup, *poulet* and *spickgans* with us and at six o'clock went to dine with the King—this is between ourselves. Your *pâté* was exquisite and remarkably fresh: I could not have imagined it would be so good. We ate it with real pleasure, and everybody thanks you for it.

I had a good laugh this afternoon. As I was crossing the road to wash my hands before dinner, a gentleman dressed in black, whom I recognised in the distance as an Englishman, stopped me. He gave me a card from Mr. Corbin "to introduce Mr. Scott Russell."[1] He told me he had built the *Great Eastern* and only asked to be allowed to go to Paris to fetch a lady who was there. I told him that the military authorities would not allow him to go, and that it was *impossible*. What was his reply?—"Oh! impossible; well, then I can manage it. If anything had been impossible for me to do, I should not have built the *Great Eastern*." And this he said in a terrible English accent and with the greatest confidence possible! . . .

You must not suppose, my pet, that I am amusing myself here. The life is horribly tedious and monotonous. Every day the same thing—one gets up at a certain hour, breakfasts, writes, then comes luncheon, one writes again, then tea, dinner, bed. I assure you it is awful, and I often want to run away; but it would be shameful to desert under the present circumstances. I have got so far as to be angry with the Parisians for so long postponing the *grande sortie* we have been

[1] In the early days of the Prussian Navy, 1849, he received orders through Admiral Prince Adalbert of Prussia to build ships for the account of the Prussian Government.

promised for so long. If they were to attack us it would at least be a change for us. I really don't know how they pass their time, if they don't even attempt a sortie.

I suppose one must be resigned. I only hope that they will end by yielding, when they are tired of eating dogs and horses. With this pleasant hope I will go to bed. . . .

November 14, 10 *a.m.*

I slept badly and heard three o'clock strike, so that I got up very late and shall not be able to write much. The weather has changed again; the sky is grey and we may possibly have rain. Nothing puts me in the dumps so much as this; it spoils my sole pleasure, that of going out.

Poor Laurenz,[1] I pity him, but I won't pay my mother's rent. Please let him understand that I prefer that she should not live in his house because there will be some annoyance at the Foreign Office if she does. I admit that it will not be pleasant if she returns; but one must try to find some way of getting out of this difficulty. It is partly your fault if you have suffered much from all this; because you always forget to give orders to the porter.

I haven't seen Perponcher for an age and don't know if he is very sad. His brother wrote me the other day from The Hague, and he tells me that poor Baudin[2] is in despair and his wife is very ill. I should like to know what Berthelin[3] says to it all. And the handsome Terneaux![4] What a come-down for all these people!

I am much pleased to see that you are making a few friends amongst the women! I hope you have now

[1] Gräfin Sophie Hatzfeldt's (Graf Paul Hatzfeldt's mother) servant.
[2] French Minister at The Hague.
[3] First Secretary of the French Legation at The Hague.
[4] Attaché at the French Legation at The Hague.

made a habit of it and that I shall find when I return that you have two or three lady friends whom you regularly visit. This will give you quite a different position in society. Do you ever see Elizabeth? and are you reconciled? How do you get on too with Mimi? Tell me, because I am interested in it all. . . .

VERSAILLES, *November* 15, 1870

I wanted to get up early this morning in order to write a long letter to you—but I was too sleepy. It is true I heard three o'clock strike again, so that I really only had six hours' sleep and that isn't too much, is it?

Your short note of Friday reached me yesterday with the letter for Mr. Hofmann. I don't know whether I shall have an opportunity for sending it on; in any case I shall have to open it. Please oblige me by not undertaking to send on letters any more, and above all no closed letters, as they will not be accepted. You have no idea how strict the regulations are on this point; and I assure you that I should be subject to the greatest possible annoyance if it were supposed that I undertook to forward a letter to Paris.

The day before yesterday another balloon was taken with quantities of letters from Paris, some of which I have read and a newspaper of the 13th. Things are beginning to get bad in every way. There is a scarcity of fresh meat, and demands for provisions are being made on private individuals, and I am very anxious about the fate of your poor ponies.

One thing that I cannot understand at all is that your father, who has always posed as a man of order, should care to remain in this mess and that he has not been long since disgusted at it all.

It seems from what is said in an unsigned letter, which evidently comes from somebody having access to the Government, that the party of reaction, those

who would like to capitulate, is beginning to raise its head, and that most of the best-known newspapers are supporting it. It remains to be seen whether they will be able to obtain anything against the buffoons of the street who have foolishly been armed and who are quite happy under the existing régime—fed by the Government and having nothing to do.

I think we shall have some news from Washburne to-morrow; he generally sends his despatches on Wednesdays. There will certainly be a letter from your mother, which I will send on to you as soon as possible.

I am delighted that you take an interest in the "Meistersinger." That is another thing that I miss a good deal—we don't hear any music. Ever since I have been here I have been intending to hire a piano and some music in order to play myself as well as I can, and I haven't had the time to do it. Solms has a good piano and plays a good deal, having scarcely anything to do. But I haven't the time to go to him often.

We had a good walk in the park yesterday and then we went to St. Cyr, where I had never been. But there is not much to be seen there. During the walk I took advantage of Bismarck being in a good humour (this is between ourselves) in order to obtain the release of somebody who in my opinion is quite innocent. I was very pleased at this.

There is no news to tell you from here. Everybody is well, and one day resembles another. . . .

VERSAILLES, *November* 16, 1870
(10 *a.m.*)

Only one line to-day. I passed a horribly sleepless night. It was partly my own fault, but the result is that I have only just got up, so I must dress at once. I was a bit sleepy after dinner last night and slept from

7.30 to 9.30 without a pause. If I could have continued sleeping I should probably have had a good night: but I had work to do. I returned to the office and drank two cups of tea to wake me up and I succeeded so well that I could not go to sleep again till four o'clock this morning.

I can easily explain why I was so tired. I had taken a long ride with Solms. We went to see some of the big guns—a very fine sight. None of us can understand why they are still silent. It certainly is not the fault of our department. In my opinion, if the bombardment were to commence the general solution would be hurried on, and this would be in the interest of everybody, even of the inhabitants of Paris. It is also in the interest of *humanity* to give them a pretext for submitting. The loss in killed and wounded would be less than the losses caused by famine. Nobody will regret any injury done to Paris more than I shall, but the responsibility will rest on those alone who are so obstinate as to insist on a defence that is absurd and who have converted a city like this into a fortress.

I shall go to the Hôtel des Réservoirs to-day to give Mr. Curtis a note from your mother and to try to find an apartment for her in the same house. . . . Your mother's remark that "France cannot be governed by a Government that sits in a balloon" proves that they are beginning to abandon their rash enthusiasm.

I must admit that I should be very pleased to see the poor ponies safe and sound. I dare not yet hope that they are so.

VERSAILLES, *November* 16, 1870
(10 *a.m.*)

I am writing on a small sheet—the kind you are so fond of! I haven't got any other, so you must be satisfied with this to-day. To make up for it, I enclose

a letter from your mother that arrived yesterday morning by the *parlementaire* who brings Washburne's despatches every week. . . .

Here we are still waiting for Trochu's wonderful sortie that was announced so long ago; it is not polite to keep people waiting. However, seriously, I wish the delay did not last so long, because if they get beaten, and it is probable that they will be, the final issue at Paris will be hurried on. There are plenty of people there who would like to fly from the city, but do not dare to say so openly. . . .

It is very funny that you are now beginning to appreciate the Meistersänger! I should like to hear the opera immensely! I am determined, if M. Trochu does not make his sortie to-day, to hire a piano and some music to amuse myself a bit when I get some free time. It would be a good way of punishing my landlord and landlady for their ill-will by playing something that will grate on their ears! . . .

VERSAILLES, *November* 18, 1870
(*after midnight*)

Having worked till now I want to write you a line before going to bed, but I can only find this one poor piece of paper, which is both old and dirty. But I suppose you won't object as we are in times of war, especially now when all the elegancies of Paris are upset by the invasion of barbarians! But I must tell you that our barbarism does not prevent our appreciating certain good things; we ate with real enjoyment that excellent pheasant *pâté* that you sent us to-day. I am requested by everybody to express to you our warm thanks for this good idea of yours. It was very nice of you, and it gave me great pleasure. Don't forget to say a nice word to Léon, who really distinguished himself in this matter. I hope the *pâté de foie gras* will be

as good. The Ministers of Bavaria, Count Bray and Herr Lutz, dined with us and shared our treat.

I was pleased with your letter of the 15th because I see that you are in a good humour and that you have some occupation, which is the best way of not finding time hang heavy on one's hands. I also received a long letter from Gräfin Benckendorf, who is still at Düsseldorf, and thinks of going to Italy for the winter, but would like to be at Berlin, in fact, etc.! Guess from whom I have also had a letter? From Wilhelm Redern. I was very much astonished, but very pleased. The letter is dated Sens, Nov. 16th: it seems that he is very well and perfectly happy. Of course he asks me to send you his compliments. What a funny chap he is! But he is a gentleman, and one always appreciates that more than anything else.

I hope to send despatches to Washburne to-morrow and will of course send a letter to your mother with them. I will tell her that you and her Benjamin, Henry, are well, and will advise her not to waste much more time. . . .

Did I tell you that Tresckow has got the command of a division? We heard from him this morning. On arriving yesterday at Dreux he found 7,000 franc-tireurs and forced them to make off. I hope we shall soon see this famous army of the Loire, and that it will get a good lesson which will prevent it from wanting to have another try. If so, I think the Parisians will not be so full of confidence. It is said that Trochu openly gives out that he can do nothing with his army if the provinces don't come to his assistance. When it is shown that the provinces will not and cannot come to his aid, they will perhaps become amenable to reason. Good night, Touti: I am going to bed. I will add a line to this scrawl to-morrow morning.

November 19 (*morning*)

Good morning, little pet! It is 10.30 and I am already at the office, after having done some business in the town. I am surrounded by old papers that have to be sent off. It is fearfully cold out of doors, and my hands are so frozen that I can scarcely write. There is nothing new except that the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg beat the French yesterday at Châteauneuf. . . .

VERSAILLES, *November* 18, 1870

I made a mistake yesterday in dating my lines the 19th. How quickly the time passes when one is bored!

For the first time for an age, Perponcher asked me last night to take tea with the King. It is true I had sent an excuse several times. I don't like going out of an evening because I have arranged to work then so as to have a little more spare time during the day. The King was very amiable, as he always is, and I had very pleasant neighbours—Pless and Kraft Hohenlohe, whom you know. There were a number of minor princes there and . . . again bored me immensely. Somebody belonging to the court remarked yesterday that it is impossible to avoid turning republican if one has to remain at court for any length of time, and I can quite understand this. It is only our good King who keeps us straight and loyal. He is an exception amongst them all; the others ought not to be shown by daylight, or rather they ought not to be shown at all, if the principle of monarchy is to be kept up.

The great question which is being passionately discussed, is the bombardment of the forts of Paris. For my part I am persuaded that it was a great mistake not to have commenced long ago. It appears that there are a number of people who imagine that it is Bismarck who opposes the bombardment. Nothing could be

more false. It can't be denied that there is a large party in Paris that ardently desires peace but doesn't yet dare to say so too openly. We should assist them by destroying some of the forts, and this would save a lot of blood which will be shed in petty engagements if we go on waiting. . . .

I should suggest, my pet, that you send me a letter for your mother recommending her to follow my advice when she gets here.

This will facilitate my task.

There is no news of interest to tell you. The army of the Loire which was to squash us like flies is quiet. Probably it is resting on the laurels it obtained from its rencontre with General Tann![1] Gambetta's proclamation about this affair is very funny! It is very modest of him to be satisfied with so little! General Tann was not beaten at all: he retired fighting with 13,000 men against more than 50,000, and carried out precisely what he was ordered to do. The French were not even able to keep the two miserable cannons of reserve that had fallen into their hands.

This is of no consequence, and I don't for a moment fear that we shall be beaten. It pains me, however, to see no issue to all this. When Paris is taken, and when the army of the Loire has been destroyed—and this will all take place—we shall have to occupy the country for months before a regular government will be in a position to constitute itself, if indeed that can ever be done. The country is so demoralised and disorganised.

However, I hope that if things take this turn, we civilians shall be able to go home and that it will be enough to leave a portion of the army here. . . .

[1] Ludwig Samson Freiherr von und zu Tann-Rathsamhausen, Bavarian General of Infantry, born June 18th, 1815; 1866 Chief of General Staff of Field-Marshal Prince Karl of Bavaria. In 1870 commanded 1st Army Corps of the 3rd Army (under the Crown Prince of Prussia) and distinguished himself at Wörth, Beaumont, and Sedan. In the autumn he was in command of the Loire. Died 1881.

VERSAILLES, *November* 20, 1870
(11 *a.m.*)

I have just written to Mme. de T. to tell the poor woman that it is quite certain that M. Ernest Baroche[1] was killed in the engagement at Le Bourget. It was not pleasant to have to write to her. Besides I don't particularly want her to have a letter from me. She was simply M. Baroche's mistress, after having previously been the mistress of Prince Napoleon. I don't pity her any the less, if she was really attached to M. Baroche; but I don't want to continue to have any relations whatever with her.

The despatches for Paris left this morning and will probably arrive this evening. I sent a letter to your mother telling her that Washburne would have to get the French Government to fix the day for her departure and that she should let me know on Tuesday, when Washburne sends us his despatches, what day has been fixed, and that I would then be at the outposts to receive her. I begged her not to delay any longer and to bring poor Thérèse with her, as it would be absurd to leave her behind in the midst of this scrimmage. I added a line to Washburne, begging him to do what he could to get them to come to a decision now. If they won't do so now, I can really do nothing more, so you won't be able to reproach me, whatever happens. Let us hope they will listen to reason at last.

To my great regret the poor ponies are still at Paris, so I can't send them to you. Heaven knows whether they are still alive. The other day it was decreed to take away all provisions and all wine from private individuals, and to divide them amongst everybody. It is quite certain that there has been no fresh meat for some time, and that a number of dogs and cats have been eaten. I suppose the rich people find some means

[1] Son of the former Minister of this name under Napoleon III.

of getting other things by paying for them. Ass and mule flesh are in great demand—at thirteen francs a pound!

Here we expected yesterday and to-day the *grande sortie* which has long been announced for the 20th or later. Lots of bets have been made on it. It was even said that the population of Versailles would all rise at the same time. But everything is so far quite quiet. It seems that the foot soldiers at Paris are raising some difficulties; they say they are always put in the van whenever a sortie is made, and that they have had enough of it; that the Garde Nationale ought to take the lead now whilst they should remain in reserve. The Garde Nationale declines this dangerous honour and that is what prevented the sortie! Besides that, they are still waiting for the army of the Loire, and are much annoyed that it does not come! In any case, and without being able to give a good reason for it, I think that Paris will surrender in a fortnight or three weeks.

This letter will reach you on the 23rd or perhaps the 24th, and I need not tell you, my Darling, that I would much rather come myself instead of the letter. It seems as if it were arranged on purpose that we should never be together on that day. Let us hope that this will be the last time, and that in future we shall always be together then. I shall drink a glass of Champagne to your health on the 24th between six and seven, and I hope you will do the same. It is a luxury you can permit yourself on such an occasion, unless you are sorry that you married me? I don't think you are, my Touti, and I hope you will never regret it. I shall never regret having married you, and I hope we shall often celebrate this day together.

VERSAILLES, *November* 20, 1870
(*midnight*)

As I have a good deal to do to-morrow morning, I will write you a line before going to bed. . . .

To-day I spent nearly the whole day strolling about and doing nothing, and I must admit that it was very nice. At two o'clock I took a ride with Bismarck-Bohlen. We had a nice time in the woods and returned at 4.30. I went out again on foot to the Hôtel des Réservoirs, a pretty good walk, in order to see Mrs. Curtis to tell her that her son is well and that your mother will certainly arrive within the next four days.

I received a pamphlet from London to-day published by M. Régnier on his negotiations with Bismarck at Ferrières. As he does me the honour of making me play a part in them, I send it to you and beg you to *take great care* of it. In my opinion he is a fool, as I have always said from the beginning; but a good sort of fellow, badly rewarded by his attached but very clumsy friends. What he says of the Empress proves again what I have always said, that she is a clever woman but incapable of coming to a decision on her own account. As a woman she certainly has the right to be undecided; but her friends—the Rouhers, the Chevreaus, the Persignys *e tutti quanti* are unpardonable. They can boast of having made her lose a game in which she held many trumps, and she can say with the old chevalier: "Mon Dieu! save me from my friends; I will protect myself quite alone against my enemies."

There is nothing new from Paris. The famous sortie did not take place, and it seems that the show has been postponed to another day; nothing too from the *grande armée de la Loire,* and I am beginning to think that it has no great desire to fight.

Your letter of the 17th, that I received yesterday,

made me laugh a good deal, because of the way you describe your character in it. It is true that you are a very spoilt child and that you can't stand being contradicted at all. As you grow older you will change in this respect. I hope you are going to send me a good photograph of yourself. Unfortunately I can't send you one of mine as the photographer has no more paper and other things and can't do any; he can't even finish our miserable group. . . . Good night, my love, I will add a line to-morrow. I must get up early, having a whole heap of things to send off *that I neglected to-day*.

November 21 (9 *a.m.*)

Good morning, little pet; I have just been pleasantly woke up by a letter from you that Keudell, who has just arrived, sent me. I was very pleased with it. I am very curious to see him, to hear what he says of you. I should like to go to you for a few days too; but that can't be managed unfortunately. I have no excuse like Keudell had for going away and Bismarck would not only refuse if I were to ask him, but would not be pleased at my even entertaining such an idea. . . .

VERSAILLES, *November* 22, 1870
(11 *a.m.*)

To-day has begun well! I am as cross as I can be! At ten o'clock I was just going to dress when the Minister sent for me to give me a verbal message for one of the Bavarian Ministers. It was raining in torrents; there were no conveyances; and I was obliged to go there and back on foot. I got wet through and was covered with mud; I assure you I was furious. This sort of work is beginning to plague me beyond measure, and my determination to resign next spring is becoming more and more settled every day. It is a

fool's errand in every respect; one is burdened with work often of a very dry sort, nowhere appreciated, badly paid, and one has no position. I have had quite enough of it, if things go on like this. As soon as I find our little cottage I will make my bow and be off. My nerves are in such a state of irritation, that I can scarcely write. To crown all, the piano-tuner is in the next room playing all sorts of melodies fit to drive me to distraction. If anyone takes it into his head to annoy me now, he will have a fine reception. . . .

VERSAILLES, *November* 23, 1870

My letter won't please you to-day, nor that of your mother either, that I received this morning. I send the letter on to you as I promised. They are more stupid than ever, and won't leave Paris. The reasons they give have no sense in them. Besides, it seems that the French Government will no longer allow foreigners to quit Paris. I think, however, an exception would be made for them. It is quite certain that diplomatists are still leaving, for the Minister for Peru left yesterday.

It seems that Paris is quiet and that your father and mother have still got provisions at their house. What your mother says about Paris being provisioned for five months is absurd. This cannot be true. I continue to believe that the present state of affairs cannot last more than three weeks. There are a large number of people at Paris who desire peace on any terms, and it is very probable that they will get the upper hand one of these days, especially if the army of the Loire meets with a serious repulse, which is pretty sure to be the case. Let us hope that all will pass off well. If Paris surrenders, I will of course not neglect anything for the protection of the house. . . . There is no danger up to now and it is quite probable that

Paris will not delay long in surrendering without a blow. . . .

The weather is still abominable, but I am in a little better humour than yesterday. My piano, although rather a bad one, affords me some amusement. I have got the score of "Romeo" and some pieces of Chopin and Mendelssohn which are not very difficult.

VERSAILLES, *November* 24, 1870
(10 *a.m.*)

It is the 24th to-day! I woke up of my own accord at nine o'clock thinking of you, and will now write a few lines to you before dressing.

How delightful it would be if we were together somewhere in the country! We should be now breakfasting with the children; then we should have a little chat; afterwards we should take a nice drive; we should dine quietly and spend the evening by the fire. Let us hope it will be like this next year when when we shall have got our famous cottage that we have been looking forward to so long!

I am determined to have it in the summer, and if Providence will grant us peace I shall look about for it till I find it. We will go about together, without a servant or a lady's maid, and will stop at all the villages. It would be the devil if we did not end by finding the little house we want.

I hope, my dear Touti, that you are well to-day and that you awoke in a good temper thinking of me. I suppose the children are playing on your bed now and that you are talking about me. If I could have managed it, I should so much have liked to have turned up now as a surprise!

As I can't do what I should like, I will at least do a good action to-day. A Maire has been arrested on suspicion of being a spy, and it seems that he is

innocent. I will go to Bismarck, and if he is in a good humour, I shall probably obtain permission that he should be set at liberty, as I have proof in my possession that they have got the wrong man. If he is in as good a mood as he was yesterday, he will grant my request at once. Last night he signed the arrangement with the Bavarians: this is a grand success. He remained with us till one o'clock in the morning, a thing he hasn't done since the war broke out. We sent for some Champagne and drank to his health and to the success of this treaty for the whole of Germany. (This is between ourselves.)

I am enclosing a line from Henry. I sent him some cigars and cigarettes yesterday. It was necessary also to send him some money. Your father leaves him without a penny in a very difficult situation. I think I shall have to send some despatches to Paris to-morrow and I will tell your mother of it. It is all very well for her to inquire after his health in all her letters, but they ought to see that he does not die of hunger. You must admit that they are extraordinary people!

Good-bye, my Darling. I received your letter of the 20th yesterday, and hope to have a good long one to-day. The weather is still mild; but it is raining and the roads are very bad. Yesterday I took a good walk from here to Ville d'Avray, and from there to Sèvres, returning by Chaville. On the way I called on my friend General Thiele, who was at Petit Val for some time. . . .

VERSAILLES, *November* 25, 1870

I am sending some letters to-day to Washburne and with them I sent one to your mother telling her the plain unvarnished truth about your father's resolution to remain in Paris. It is really unpardonable! I also wrote to Washburne telling him my point of view.

We can only hope that they will end by listening to reason and that there will be some way of obtaining a safe-conduct from this wretched French Government. I also told your mother that Henry can't remain without money, and that she ought to send me some for him. I told her too that I had already given him 500 francs and begged her to pay me back.

I have no news of the poor ponies. If they are still alive, I hope Wittgenstein will bring them. It will be very difficult to send them to Berlin now as I have no reliable person to send with them. But they will be well looked after here, and I will send them to you as soon as possible, that is to say if they haven't been made into cutlets. I have just received your letter of the 22nd, which pleased me greatly.

. . . The article in the *Français* shows again that the French are incorrigible and that they are in need of some real good lessons. It is to be hoped that they will get one in a few days that will show them that we are not afraid of attacking the army of the Loire. It seems that in Paris they have renounced the idea of making a sortie *en masse*, although they talked such a lot about it. Of course they are still waiting for the army of the Loire, and the Garde Nationale has no particular wish to leave the ramparts. They are quite right, but it is very annoying for us that they won't give us this little entertainment. . . .

I drank a big glass of Champagne to your health yesterday. I hope you did the same.

I have just been interrupted again by the steward of the Palais du Trianon: he has asked me to protect him against the republican Maire of Versailles, who wants to dismiss him. M. le Maire will hear from me! . . .

VERSAILLES, *November* 26, 1870

I received your letter of the 23rd this morning. It is not the long one you promised. I hope the latter will arrive to-morrow.

By the way I have a bone to pick with you. How in the world could you think for a moment that I had anything to do with the *Moniteur de Versailles?* It doesn't contain a line from me; and I beg you to believe this and to mention it when you have an opportunity. At the same time, it is a very good thing for the inhabitants to have some sort of a newspaper, even if it be badly written. And it renders us some services too by enlightening the public about the true situation.

There is nothing new from Paris nor from the army of the Loire. This will continue probably for some days. Here people are betting that Paris will surrender on December 6th. I think this is impossible, as they have not yet got to the end of their resources. Besides, they still flatter themselves with illusions about the intervention of the Powers. So I think we shall still have to exercise patience for a bit. I am beginning to lose mine. This sojourn here is a horrible nuisance, and I am longing for the end.

I can quite understand that you don't like going out so frequently to visit the Queen, but you must do so as often as you can without fatiguing yourself too much. It is unnecessary to recommend you, is it not, to be extremely discreet in everything you say? You must always answer that I never mention politics in my letters. This is especially essential now when there are again some misunderstandings at Court. Don't forget that the least word coming from you is commented upon and repeated immediately, and that any imprudence on your part would be visited on my head.

I think I told you yesterday about the steward of the Trianon, whom the republican Maire of Versailles was

persecuting because he does not belong to his party. Early this morning I went to the Préfet and directed him to write to the Maire to the effect that the Trianon Palaces did not come within his department, that the steward was in no sense his subordinate, and that the latter was to continue to hold his appointment. I am delighted at having put this insolent Maire in his place.

VERSAILLES, *November* 27, 1870

Only one line to-day. I have just returned with Henry. We had ridden over to Chaville to see General Thiele, and we lunched with him. I found your nice letter of the 24th on my return. I will reply to it to-morrow as the post-bag is to be closed in five minutes.

Henry dined with us yesterday. Bismarck made him a present of an envelope with his address in the King's handwriting, under which he wrote:—"I certify that this is the handwriting of H.M. the King.—Bismarck."

It is a nice autograph for which an American or an Englishman would give a thousand francs.

Henry is dining with us to-day also and to-morrow he will return to Petit Val. He has a pretty basket carriage with two very small ponies. An officer made him a present of them, as it was not known who was the real owner.

VERSAILLES, *November* 28, 1870
(2 *p.m.*)

Henry has only just left, so that I hadn't time to write sooner. He was not keen on returning to his own quarters and would not have minded remaining here. But his presence there is necessary, especially now when the troops are constantly changing. We lunched

together at the Hôtel des Réservoirs and then he left in his basket-carriage with his two diminutive ponies. I gave him 250 francs, which will be enough for him for some time. When he wants something he will write to me for it. I told your mother that he can't remain without money and am curious as to what she will answer. Since they have been in Paris they have sent him fifty francs—one single time! It is almost incredible.

There is nothing new here. Yesterday and the day before the French fired all night from the forts. We thought there would have been a sortie to-day because it was known that the gates of Paris were to be closed for three days and to-day was the last. But everything remained quiet. This is really very tiresome. We still know nothing from the Loire, except Manteuffel's[1] engagement and the smack Garibaldi has received. It was all very well done, but is not decisive. I have just met my friend Borcke, who declared that Moltke said yesterday that he still thought that we should possibly be back in Berlin for Christmas. I know nothing about it. If the army of the Loire retires, it may still last a long time. Paris has not yet been reduced to her last piece of bread and won't surrender

[1] Edwin, Baron von Manteuffel, born 1809; entered Prussian Dragoons of the Guard in 1827; frequently sent on diplomatic missions to Austria and Russia in early life; took part in Danish war 1864, and made Commander of the Prussian troops in the Elba province after the war, and afterwards Governor of Schleswig; also took part in the war of 1866; in 1870-1 commanded 1st Army Corps, and distinguished himself at the battles of Columbey-Norritz and Noineville; directed the siege of Metz, and after the fall of Metz assumed command of the First Army; was at Amiens and besieged Rouen; in January, 1871, made commander of the South Army; was at Belfort; compelled Bourbaki at Pontarlier to cross the Swiss frontier; in June appointed commander of the army of occupation in France, which post he retained till 1873, when the German troops left; in 1873 made Field-Marshal General; in 1876 and 1879 sent on diplomatic missions to Russia, where he was made F.M.G. in the Russian army; in 1879 appointed Statthalter of Elsass-Lothringen. Died 17th June, 1885.

until the army of the Loire has sustained a decisive defeat. . . .

I received your letter of the 25th this morning, and also a letter from Mélanie, who wants me to protect her convent at Paris and her friend Narischkin![1] As if we were as far as this! . . . I am so exasperated that my nerves feel as if they were bruised all over. My sole pleasure is the arrival of your letters. . . .

VERSAILLES, *November* 29, 1870

The whole night there has been a perpetual cannonade which has prevented me from sleeping properly. At eight o'clock my stupid donkey of a servant called me because the shooting became more frequent and a sortie was expected. I got up, hoping that something would take place and that we should ride out to see the action. But it all ended in nothing. There was a sortie, but it was at Villejuif a long distance from here. The French have made two attacks, both of which have been vigorously repulsed. Near Montretout two regiments were seen, but they were content with letting themselves be admired from a distance. Just now the cannons are quiet, so it is probably all over. One can't understand the object of these sorties, which are of no use except for the killing of a few men on both sides. More than six hundred shells fell amongst the Bavarians yesterday, only causing a few wounds. And every cannon shot costs three hundred and fifty francs!

You will have seen in the newspapers that Amiens is occupied, and that there have been some engagements with the army of the Loire, which has been beaten on every occasion. But nothing decisive has taken place yet, and will not take place for some days. I hope something will happen soon, however.

[1] Lady Superior of the Convent of S. Vincent de Paul at Paris.

Your letter of the 26th arrived this morning—the cigarettes and sausages also. We ate one of the latter at luncheon to-day; it was very good and was universally appreciated. Many thanks, little pet, for thinking of our comforts.

Raymond's[1] letter is more than absurd—it is stupid. It is the old story—everything that France does is right; and when she wages war on another nation and takes some provinces from it, that nation ought to consider itself highly honoured! But if it happens that she is stronger than France and desires peace on conditions that will deliver her once for all from the aggressions of France, then—no anathemas are strong enough for the barbarians who presume to beat the French and to tread the sacred soil of the "grande nation." This is talk that does not produce the slightest effect. As you say, there is but one answer—"If you are such a good Frenchman, why are you not on the ramparts?"

Did you read the despatches that were found at St. Cloud? They are the best reply to those who declare that the French nation did not desire war against us, and that we ought to have withdrawn from the country after the fall of the Empire.

To my great regret I am dining to-day at the Court. This will prevent me from going out for a ride at four o'clock. Perponcher must be ill: that is the only explanation of the fact that he has invited one of us to dinner.

As I write, I hear the drums and the bands of the regiments which are passing down the Avenue de St. Cloud in order to advance to the front. Of course they will soon return without having met the enemy. . . .

[1] Mr. Raymond Moulton, brother of Gräfin Hatzfeldt.

VERSAILLES, *November* 30, 1870
(1 *p.m.*)

Only a line to day. The Minister has decided all of a sudden to go to the Aqueduct of Marly, and we are off at once, so that I can't write at greater length. The French guns did not cease firing the whole night and they are still at it. But they do very little harm. Yesterday's sortie was of no use to them. They lost a number of men (all apparently belonging to Vinoy's corps of the line), and several hundreds of men with five officers were taken prisoners. To-day, despite the cannonade, they have not tried to get out.

I have no news of your mother. In consequence of the sortie, Washburne's despatches have not arrived yet. . . .

. . . I dined with the King yesterday; he was charming, as he always is. I send you the menu of the dinner, which you can keep. After dinner we went to Lehndorff's room, where we played at quinze, a very innocent gambling game. I won sixty francs.

I don't know what your allusions to Mme. P. can mean. She is a good woman of fifty, and I haven't seen her for a month. . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 1, 1870

You were probably not pleased at only receiving a line from me yesterday, but I could not possibly write any more, as I was obliged to leave immediately for the Aqueduct at Marly, where we hoped to see something. Our hope was not realised because the French sortie took place precisely in the opposite direction. We don't know any details yet, except that they were repulsed by the Württembergers after they had advanced a short distance. All this is in the newspapers

and you will know it before this letter reaches you. I suppose you are a little anxious about Petit Val, which was very near the firing this time. Boneuil was occupied by the French and retaken afterwards. You see now that it would be impossible to let you come to Petit Val or to let your mother go there. I wrote to Henry this morning to ask him what took place and to beg him to write direct to you to set your mind at ease. I hope he will do so without delay.

We have now had two sorties on the part of the French at different points during the last few days, both of which were repulsed. The check sustained by the army of the North at Amiens was much more serious than we thought. The French losses are estimated at 7,000 men. They are thus retiring instead of advancing to raise the siege of Paris as the Parisians hoped they would. It is quite certain that they only made these sorties in order to facilitate the action of the army of the Loire. If they already know of the defeat at Amiens, this ought to damp their spirits a bit. Let us hope that something decisive will soon take place in the direction of the Loire, for then they may perhaps determine on negotiating.

You are mistaken if you think that we were anxious for a moment after the affair at Orléans. Even in the event of a defeat, which did not take place, or if the army of the Loire had been able to advance further, we were quite capable of defending ourselves. It is certain that people have had a wrong impression about the food that was in Paris. At Ferrières it was thought that the inhabitants would have nothing more to eat after three weeks; and I was laughed at a good deal because I affirmed that they could hold out longer than that. I told the King so the day before yesterday, and he answered that he had always been of my opinion. But one must not conclude from this that they are revelling in plenty now after two months of

siege. Even if the rich can still procure meat—*i.e.* horse-flesh—there can be no doubt that the poorer classes are suffering a good deal, being utterly unable to pay the fabulous prices asked for meat. Of course the latter are the majority; the time will come—any time between a fortnight and two months—when they will have had enough of it.

We should get on quicker if we were to decide to commence the bombardment—not of the city, but of some of the forts. When the Parisians see how far our guns carry and how short a distance their guns carry, a greater effect will be produced on them than one imagines. So far, they have only heard the sound of their own cannons, and they fancy that we have none or that we dare not venture on using them for fear of the neutral Powers who play a great part in their calculations. In my opinion it is a very great mistake to allow them to continue to deceive themselves. I hope our people will acknowledge this soon.

I have still no news from your mother, as Washburne's letters have not yet arrived. Perhaps the French won't allow anybody to come out any more. I am rather hampered now as regards writing to your mother, as Bismarck has decided that letters to Washburne are to be left open in future. The result will be that the French will read everything before the letters reach their destination. The enthusiasm of your relatives for the French is very funny, and I should laugh at it if there were not one great inconvenience attached to it. It will be quite impossible to go to see them here for a long time; even you could not —that is to say if we want to avoid quarrels. I am not at all inclined to allow anybody to talk abuse of the kind contained in Raymond's letter. . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 2, 1870

I have just received your letter of November 29th with the photographs of the children, which gave me great pleasure. As soon as I can get out, I will go to see if it is possible to buy some frames, so that I can put them on the table. Nelly has a decided look of you about her; baby is sentimental-looking. He seems to have moved. I don't like your not having sent a photograph of yourself, which you promised to do. It's only an excuse to say that it did not turn out well. There are some very good photographers at Berlin, so I hope you will lose no time in going to get one done for me. Take the children too and have a group made of the three of you. They tell me that there is a photographer here now. I will make inquiries in order to have my photograph taken, but you shan't have a copy until you have sent me yours. So if you want to have one, my little pet, it depends upon yourself.

Fighting is going on again to-day at Champigny, but this time it is the Württemberg troops who are attacking the French, and I hear that they are gaining the day. Funnily enough, General Ducrot, famous for the curious way in which he keeps his *parole d'honneur*, has already sent a report to Tours, in which it is said that the last sortie was a complete success. The French are really liars by nature—it is in their blood; one has no right to attribute this quality specially to the Empire.

The weather has been fearfully cold since yesterday. Last night it froze, and all the streams have a coating of ice. The Parisians think that this will be very disagreeable for us. We, on our side, know that they are in want of wood; and besides that, we can put up with the cold much better than they, and have got all the forests in the neighbourhood from which we can

get wood for heating purposes. I should like to take a ride to-day, but Bismarck-Bohlen thinks it is too cold. As I don't care to go alone, we shall take a drive instead.

I didn't know the remark about Gladstone, and very much doubt that Bismarck said it. So many things are put down to his account. I like Odo Russell[1] pretty well: he is not at all like an Englishman.

As to the bombardment—I think we have got all we want: more cannons than we can make use of, but there are occult and powerful influences at work which are opposed to it. I am very sorry for every reason, and chiefly for the sake of the French themselves, for we don't want to destroy nor to inflict any damage on Paris. If they were to see some forts destroyed they would perhaps become amenable to reason. It will do them no good to offer so long a resistance, because we can afford to wait.

No news of Washburne. I suppose Trochu won't let anybody leave until he has finished his little sorties. Just now I was reading an English newspaper—I think it was the *Daily News;* its Paris Correspondent spoke very slightingly of him. He says that the Government understand nothing, that they cannot even draw up their proclamations, which read like the sayings of the Trappists—*e.g.* Brother, one must die! He is mistaken if he thinks that the Parisians will like this, or

[1] When the Franco-German War broke out Mr. Odo Russell (afterwards Lord Ampthill) left the Papal Court at Rome, where he was the Queen's representative, and was appointed Under-Secretary of State in the Foreign Office in Downing Street. He was sent as special envoy to the Prussian Head-quarters at Versailles, as Lord Augustus Loftus was considered by Bismarck to entertain too strong sympathies for France. He carried out this mission to the entire satisfaction of Queen Victoria and of the Government of the King of Prussia, so that he was afterwards selected as British Ambassador in Berlin on October 16th, 1871. He took part in the Berlin Congress in 1878, and died at Potsdam in August, 1884.

that it will give them courage. He says of him what Benedek[1] used to say: "He has his plan! . . ."

VERSAILLES, *December* 3, 1870

I received your letter of the 1st this morning as well as another from Mr. Hofmann.[2] I don't know when or how I can send it on to his address.

There was some fighting again all day yesterday at Brie and Champigny and the results were not always the same. It seems that Trochu is bent on passing our lines and that he is collecting all the forces he can. They have got the railway from Varennes and it is said that troops are arriving every day. I suppose that the fighting is going on to-day too. Trochu's object is evidently to effect a union with the army of the Loire, and to catch us between two fires. I don't think he will succeed in passing, although his position is much more favourable than ours, because he can select his point of attack and can concentrate his masses on one point, whereas our line is necessarily very extended and consequently weaker.

Meanwhile, the army of the Loire sustained a further check yesterday—rather a serious one—from the troops of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg. I happened to be with the King when the telegram arrived. They were thrown back upon Artenay and we took Poupey by assault and captured eleven or twelve cannons and a good number of prisoners. The same thing is probably taking place to-day. Even if Trochu were to succeed in forcing our line here at any point, he would not gain much, for he would not find the army of the

[1] Ludwig von Benedek, Austrian Feldzeugmeister, born 1804; distinguished himself at Solferino in 1859 as Commander of the 8th Army Corps; in 1866 was Commander-in-Chief of the North Army in Bohemia against Prussia; deprived of his command after Königgrätz, and lived in retirement till his death in 1881.

[2] Secretary of the American Legation.

Loire on which he is sure to be counting. Anyhow, we have surmounted the period of quiet and inactivity in which everybody seemed to have gone to sleep. This warms us up a bit, and I think we are moving now towards something decisive. Heaven be praised! There will be a good deal more blood shed on both sides, but this cannot be avoided. . . .

Last night I slept very badly; stupidly enough, it was the cannon shots that woke me up. I ought to be accustomed to them, and till now they have never troubled me. Perhaps it was worse than usual last night; once the windows shook. And perhaps, too, I was a little nervous; I thought they were beating to arms. It was very stupid of me, but there is nothing to be done against disordered nerves.

In return for being polite yesterday and for having paid a call on the Curtises to take them some money that had come for them from Berlin, I have to be bored by dining with them to-morrow. It is sure to be fearfully tedious. They are very good people, but not entertaining! I received a letter just now from Henry, dated the 29th. I send it on to you. He arrived home safely after having met with a few adventures and he is quite well. . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 4, 1870

Another victorious movement of our army against that of the Loire is announced. Near Paris everything remains the same, but I think that a decisive action is imminent. It seems that the French have united about 100,000 men and that they are constructing some new batteries. This will become very serious. If they are repulsed we can hope that they will decide to treat for peace. If they succeed in getting through, I don't know what will happen and will give it up. Anyhow, it would be very regrettable as the struggle would be thereby prolonged.

It seems that they are getting more pacific at Tours, the natural result of the defeats of the army of the Loire. A success in the neighbourhood of Paris would revive their confidence, and Heaven knows how long the war would then last. . . .

St. Priest's letter about the abundance of provisions is of no importance. They said exactly the same thing at Metz right up to the last moment. He cannot say anything else. I think too that the rich are not yet suffering, but that is not the question; it is certain that the poor have not got enough to eat. The weather is frightfully cold here. . . .

I hope you will have a Christmas Tree for the children. If I am not present in person, my photograph will be. We shall all have a very sad Christmas here.

I don't know what people have been telling you about the society of Versailles. I suppose it amuses those who know your weak point to laugh at you a bit. . . . Your *pâté* arrived this morning and we have just eaten some of it at luncheon. It is a very good one, and I thank you for it. The gloves arrived too. Thank Heaven!

It is nearly 2.30 and I must leave you. I have the pleasure of having to write a long communication to Washburne in French, which he understands very badly. I have no news from him, so I am beginning to think that Trochu won't allow the despatches to leave Paris any longer, so that we shall not know what is going on there. . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 5, 1870

Having worked pretty late last night I did not wake till 9.30 when your letter of the 2nd was brought to me. I trust you are right in hoping that the affair in the East will be settled amicably. Things are moving

pretty quickly here. You will know by the telegrams of yesterday's affair. We took another thirty cannons, the French were repulsed, and one of the suburbs of Orléans was occupied. At this moment Orléans must be again in our power. Here, near Paris, the French (franc-tireurs) are also retreating. It seems that they have evacuated Brie and Champigny and destroyed four of their bridges on the Marne. This is surprising and can only be explained on the supposition that they have had news of the army of the Loire, of its defeat and retirement. If things continue to go well for us in that direction, I don't think there will be another serious sortie from Paris, as Trochu knows perfectly well that he can do nothing if no help comes to him from without.

We may therefore hope this time that we shan't have to wait long for something decisive. Meanwhile I wonder whether Washburne's despatches will come to-morrow. It is the regular day for their arrival, and if they don't come it will be because the Government has some reasons for not allowing any further communication with outside, and is meditating something that they don't want to get talked about. If the bag of despatches arrives, it will be a sign, in my opinion, that they have given up all idea of taking any offensive movement for the present. Mont Valérien has not left off firing, and from time to time there are some regular volleys which make the windows shake. It is said that they have constructed an enormous cannon that carries much farther, and I am prepared to receive a shell in my soup one of these days when we are sitting quietly at dinner!

I dined last night with the Curtises. They are good people and, what's more to the point, they gave me a good dinner. In return, I made an effort to be very amiable. You can form your own opinion when you hear that I arrived there at 6.30 and did not leave till

ten. That was pretty good methinks. It is true that they allowed me to smoke for a good half-hour after dinner. . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 6, 1870

For the first time for a fortnight we have had some despatches from Washburne, so I can send you a letter from your mother. It does not, unfortunately, contain much news except that they are well. I think they would like to leave Paris now. She says a good deal about the ponies, which are still alive; but I don't think there is much chance of seeing them again. I have also just seen a line from Wittgenstein to Radziwill. He says he thinks of leaving Paris immediately. If he does, there is a last very poor chance of seeing the ponies escape death.

Last night I was with the King just as a telegram arrived from Prince Friedrich Karl saying that the army of the Loire was in full flight in different directions, and that we had taken 10,000 men besides the wounded, 77 cannons and several mitrailleuses. This is very good news. The defeat is much greater and more complete than was thought at first. They know about it now at Paris, so we must hope that they will soon see that there is nothing more to be done and that they had better surrender. They are keeping quiet just now. There is hardly any sound from the forts, and they seem to have given up all idea of any aggressive movement.

I received your letter of the 3rd this morning, and also a letter from Franziska telling me of poor Stanislas' death. I am very sorry to hear of it. Poor fellow! I hoped he would get on better after this war. Some people have no luck and others profit by it. Hermann is now sole heir to a good fortune and the future proprietor of Trachenberg. Let us hope he will return

safe and sound. Franziska wants to have Stanislas' body taken to Trachenberg. I have replied that I will do my best, but that his father must say he wishes it and must send somebody to take it away. I will inquire to-day if the place where he was buried is known. Of course we must know this. How is Elisabeth? She must be quite upset.

There is nothing new to tell you from here, my little pet. We are awaiting the course of events. I very much hope that the French will be sensible enough to commence negotiations. It is really absurd to continue this butchery any longer, and quite unpardonable on the part of the people who are governing this unhappy country. You will see in your mother's letter that your father is now quite against the Emperor. It is very funny after having formerly praised him to the skies. With a versatility of mind like this a country is brought to the brink of a precipice.

Yesterday, despite the cold, I went out for a ride and met Putbus. We had a charming ride together from 2.30 to 5. . . . We discovered a delightful château, completely abandoned and half in ruins, from which there is a splendid view over Paris and one can see Mont Valérien. What a lovely country, and what charming properties! How sad it is to see all this abandoned and in a state of ruin! . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 7, 1870

I have just received your note of the 4th and must confine myself to-day to a few lines. I have been busy all the morning and am still surrounded by papers and it is nearly 2.30. I must write a letter of condolence to my uncle and to Franziska. . . .

News of small victories and of new successes of the army near Orléans continues to come in. It is a really big defeat for the army of the Loire. If they were

sensible people they would already have begun negotiations for peace. But of course they are not sensible people, and it is impossible to foretell what they will do.

I received a line last night from Redern, which I enclose. Bismarck allowed me to telegraph a few words to the Minister for your mother and I hope she received them. . . . I saw Ferdinand Radziwill yesterday: he was returning from a drive in the park. He still limps a bit, but looks well and is as gay as a lark. Tell his wife this if you see her. . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 8, 1870

This morning I received your letter of the 5th with your description of the Reichstag. It made me laugh very heartily. If you want to hear effective speeches such as one hears at the Corps Législatif, you must not go to the Reichstag or to any German parliament.

I cannot quite make out whether Delbrück[1] read the Bavarian letter at the right moment, as I have no report of the sitting, but I have no doubt he did so. He is an amiable man, and is said to be a good worker, but I do not share the opinion of those who take him to be a remarkable man. The essential point now is that the Reichstag should accept the treaties with the southern states. It would be a great misfortune and an enormous mistake to reject them. It would be

[1] Martin Friedrich Rudolf von Delbrück, b. 1817; negotiated in 1862 the commercial treaties between Prussia and France, England, Belgium, and Italy. In 1868 he was made Minister of State in Prussia. In October, 1870, he went on a diplomatic mission to the South German States in order to effect the political union of Germany: the Versailles Agreements of the 15th, 23rd, and 25th November, 1870, were the result hereof. When he retired in 1876, Bismarck took over the management of Germany's commercial policy, which Delbrück had hitherto directed. Under Bismarck this policy became more and more protectionist. In 1896 Delbrück received the Order of the Black Eagle. He died in 1903.

difficult to render a worse service to Germany. Of course it would have been better and more useful if we could have obtained more, but we could not have done so except by force, and this would have been an abominable act of ingratitude at the moment when the Bavarians and Württembergers are shedding their blood for the common cause. And besides, the treaties contain the commencement of the unity of Germany to a greater extent than one could have dreamt would be possible ten years ago. It would be very foolish to sacrifice these advantages because one cannot get all one wants.

Never has the proverb "Let well alone" been found to be more true than in this case.

Things are going on well at Orléans. Yesterday Tresckow had another success with his division. He defeated 12,000 French and took one gun and a mitrailleuse. The prisoners from Artenay were brought here yesterday. I did not see them, but they are said to be looking very bad; many of them were dressed in blouses, and there were a lot of children of fifteen and sixteen years of age amongst them! It is very sad, but this Government of lawyers is solely to blame for it all, for they cannot make up their minds to resign. Our troops are said to be in very good health despite the bad weather. Unfortunately it is not all over, and a lot more blood will be shed before negotiations for peace have begun.

Everything is pretty quiet round Paris. The forts of Mont Valérien fire from time to time and their balls drop about two thousand yards from here, doing very little harm. Yesterday I had a ride with Putbus in the direction of Ville d'Avray, and five or six times we distinctly heard the whistling of a shell that burst eight or ten seconds afterwards. It is a curious noise. Of course there was no danger where we were, so you need not be alarmed. I have no desire to get myself

killed in such foolish fashion by a shell, and shall not unnecessarily expose myself.

It is not true that there are French marauders on the roads between Creteil and Versailles. There are troops in all directions and it would be impossible therefore for them to be here. But one hears that there are some between the French outposts and Paris. It is said that people leaving the city without an escort have been attacked. Still there is no proof that this is true. . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 9, 1870

I have just received your letter of the 6th. It seems to me that you are tiring yourself a great deal now. You run to the Reichstag and to the opera and go to see the Queen as if you were in a normal condition. I should say that this was a little too much for you. You must be sensible—the word you are so fond of using—and must not fatigue yourself just now.

If anybody has had enough of this cursed war, it is I. It has lasted too long and in consequence of the change of Government in France things have assumed a savage character which it pains one to contemplate. They have discovered a means of exciting the population. In the villages people shoot from the windows, and our soldiers are being assassinated in a cowardly manner. The inevitable result is that the latter regard all the inhabitants of the country as enemies, and treat them and their houses accordingly. This is very sad, and I am sorry for it, because a terrible hatred will accrue therefrom that will last for years. The responsibility must fall on those who have preferred their ambition and their personal ideas to the safety of the country. When people openly begin to preach war to the knife, and invoke all the passions of the masses to their assistance, they must not be astonished

if the soldiers become ferocious too, and if the whole country is devastated. . . .

There is nothing new to tell you from here. Around Paris everything seems to be quiet. And there is nothing of importance from Orléans. It is not all over down there yet and a lot more blood will have to be shed before we get as far as that. I am awaiting with impatience the surrender of Paris, for I hope that we shall then be able to go away from here. I don't think the presence of the King would be necessary any longer after that. He is greatly upset by the news of the death of Princess Frederick of the Netherlands.[1] I am also very sorry, for she was always very kind to us.

The weather is pretty fine, but everything is covered with snow, so that I cannot ride. This is very tiresome. Last night I went to Lehndorff's and—horrible to say—I played at faro. I lost a good deal, but won it back luckily, and then I thought it was time to be off. It doesn't amuse me much, but one must do something sometimes to get rid of one's ennui. . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 10, 1870

Only a line to-day. I have a great deal to do, and the post closes in a few minutes. I received your letter of the 7th this morning. . . I have this moment received your letter that Lynar brought with him. He has just sent it to me. He looks very happy and I congratulated him warmly, but I can't tell why I did so, as I don't know who Miss Parsons[2] is. Have I seen her at Paris? Give me some details about her, and her family and fortune. I hope she has some

[1] She was Princess Louise of Prussia, daughter of King Friedrich Wilhelm III.

[2] Miss May Parsons, daughter of Mr. George Parsons, of Etmenhurst, Ohio, U.S.A.

money, because he wants some with his unfortunate title of Prince. That reminds me—poor ——! they say he was married in Hungary, and that his widow is enceinte, so that ——'s chances are not so good as they were. Do you know anything about this? It is said that the Princess started immediately for Hungary to test the truth of the story.

I did not know either that Macca[1] had been wounded. We know nothing about it here. Nothing new from the Loire, except a letter from Redern, who has asked me for some cigars, and tells me that they have 30,000 prisoners. What are we to do with all these people? The whole business is not finished in my opinion, and there will be more serious fighting down there. We hope here that our authorities will decide to commence the bombardment. If people at Berlin are impatient on this point, we are much more so here, I can assure you. There will be real shouts of joy when we hear the first cannon shot from our side. . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 11, 1870

There was fighting all day yesterday again near Orléans and the French even made an attack. They were repulsed with a loss of several hundred prisoners. The work is not over down there as was thought at first, and we shall have some trouble still.

Nothing has happened here for some days. They say there have been some public fêtes at Paris; at all events a good many people have been seen in the Bois de Boulogne—men and women shouting and singing! Of course we don't know what this signifies. Doubtless the Government has thought fit to announce some victory. It is certain, anyhow, that they have something to eat, and that they don't show any sign of wanting to surrender. I think that they are contem-

[1] Baron Loë, cf. *supra*, p. 4.

plating a new sortie, and I hope they will carry it out on this side, so that we can see something.

The newspapers declare that a band has been formed at Tours with the object of coming to Versailles to carry off the General Staff. We shall be very pleased to see them here. Meanwhile Gambetta's Government has announced that they are retiring to Bordeaux so *as not to be in the way* of the military operations. If the French can swallow this, they must have strong stomachs. What funny people! Ignorant and frivolous beyond description! Devoid of principles, character and judgment; but very patriotic and very thoughtless. They make tremendous efforts worthy of admiration and above all of a better cause.

We have half a foot of snow and all the trees and the roofs of the houses are white. It is exactly like a German winter, the only difference being that it is not very cold. There is some skating on the lakes in the park. . . .

I also am beginning to think, my Touti, that I shall not be back by Christmas. This is a great pain to me. It will be a melancholy fête here, and you will be very lonesome also. We must resign ourselves, however, to circumstances. Above all, don't dream of coming here. If it were necessary, I would formally forbid you to do so, even if you were quite well. The journey would be troublesome and tiring and even dangerous, so that I should not consent to it. In your present condition you must remain quiet. Just imagine that one is always more or less in danger of falling into an ambuscade of franc-tireurs, and then you will understand that I would certainly not permit you to expose yourself to such dangers without real necessity. . . .

Is it true that poor Rhaden, the Lucca's husband is dead? It is rumoured here that he is.

VERSAILLES, *December* 12, 1870

There is nothing new to report from here. It is said that the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg is pursuing the French troops against whom he has been fighting, and that they are completely routed. I hope this is true, and that the same will take place with the army of the Loire. In my opinion it is the only chance of obtaining peace in the near future.

So far, I do not know anything of Gambetta's request for an armistice, of which you speak. Such a request would be of no use, as we should not assent to it here. The French would take advantage of it to reorganise themselves, and to send fresh troops against us. We have already given them too much time for this sort of thing. It is impossible for Paris to hold out much longer now, so it would be very stupid for us to give them the means of continuing to resist without being sure of peace.

Abeken has never telegraphed to Maltzan. Redern asked me in his letter to telegraph to his mother and to tell Maltzan at the same time that his two sons were well. The Minister allowed me to add this to an official despatch, which was perhaps signed by Abeken. But the information comes from me. You can tell Maltzan this if you see him. . . .

Frau von Rochow's parcel has arrived. I have given orders that it should be sent to the Head-quarters of the 3rd Army, where Herr von Mutius[1] is. . . .

Poor Bismarck-Bohlen has been confined to his room for five or six days with an attack of rheumatism and is horribly bored. The Minister has also been a little indisposed for some days. It has been very cold lately. To-day it is thawing and it is very damp. . . .

[1] Officer of the Gardes du Corps; on the staff of the Crown Prince.

VERSAILLES, *December* 13, 1870

I can give you a little bit of news to-day that will please you. The ponies have arrived here! Wittgenstein, Clarmont and little Desjardin[1] have left Paris, by special permission from Trochu, and little Desjardin drove the ponies, which were harnessed to a small *coupé* belonging to Prince Croy of the Belgian Legation. It was a good long trot for the poor animals. They spent the night at Villeneuve St. Georges, and only arrived here yesterday evening. *En route* a halter broke and the carriage turned over. They had all sorts of adventures, but they don't feel any bad effects from them. I went to see them last night at the stables of the barracks, where they are with the other horses. They are in good condition and didn't seem to be a bit tired. They ate eagerly, even the straw and the litter. I will let them rest to-day and to-morrow. I shall have to take another man to look after them, and will try to hire a basket carriage to which I can harness them. I hope you will be pleased to know that the poor creatures are out of Paris.

Washburne's letters arrived a little while ago and with them the enclosed letters from your mother and Mademoiselle, which I hasten to send you. I also send you the letter that little Desjardin brought me yesterday with your mother's photograph. This will please you and set you at ease, for you will see that they are well. From what these gentlemen say, the resources of Paris are far from being exhausted. One cannot understand it! . . .

The boar's head arrived yesterday in a case together with a pot of Cumberland sauce. Many thanks; I hope we shall eat some of it to-day or to-morrow. . . .

[1] M. Desjardin, Secretary of the Belgian Legation in Paris.

VERSAILLES, *December* 14, 1870

Only a line to-day. It is 2.30 and I have just time to say good morning to you.

I am in a state of mind quite impossible to describe—irritable, discouraged, angry, in one word exasperated. I can't explain the reason. There are a whole heap of reasons—the bad weather, the ennui of this life, the interminable length of this war, etc., etc. I want to breathe too in order to calm my nerves a bit. I think that I will spend a day at Petit Val if I can find a conveyance. I can see what is going on there and take a letter from your mother to Henry with some money and some clothes that she has sent me for him.

The ponies seem to be all right. I shall let them rest to-day, and to-morrow I shall let them go out a bit.

There is nothing new here. The capitulation of Montmédy is announced. I am beginning to be quite *blasé* with news of this kind. Only one thing would give me real pleasure—either the surrender of Paris or a decisive victory over the army of the Loire.

I was with the King last night. We read Bazaine's pamphlet, which is very interesting. The King looks well and is amiable, as he always is. . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 15, 1870

How funny! Yesterday I wrote an irritable letter to you and to-day I received a similar one from you. Evidently we have both had enough of this sort of life.

I have found a little basket carriage here which I can hire and can harness the ponies to it. The day after to-morrow I shall go to Petit Val, if I can, to take Henry your mother's letter with the money. I think he will be very pleased with this.

There is no news except that of the capitulation of Montmédy, whereby we have got a quantity of cannons

and prisoners. We shall soon not know where to put them all. The other day we were considering about drawing up a list of the French prisoners and it was calculated that we should want more than three thousand large-sized sheets of paper and that the work would be a very arduous one. I hope we shall end by deciding to bombard the forts. I have always thought and still think that it is the only way of making the Parisians comprehend the situation.

People are furious here against Wittgenstein. They accuse him of sympathising with the French. He says the French have all they want at Paris. I am delighted to hear this because that may put an end to our hesitation to use our cannons. It is in the interest of the Parisians themselves that we should bombard the forts, for if we don't they will continue to deceive themselves as to the real situation. They will eat up their last piece of bread before surrendering, unless they see that they are being seriously attacked.

I don't understand why Duke Wilhelm[1] thinks I did not recognise him. I have not seen him once. We live so entirely apart, that I see nobody except of an evening at the King's, and he never once went there.

My friend M. Regnier has written another pamphlet.

Good-bye, my good Touti; I hear the ponies at my door, so I must go downstairs. . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 16, 1870

Your letter of the 13th that I received when I woke up this morning gave me great pleasure. I like letters of that sort—eight pages long—that speak of everything and tell me what you are doing and how you pass your time. It brightened me up for the whole day. I wanted it badly, as I was irritable and worried without knowing why. Feeling tired, I stopped at home to

[1] Duke Wilhelm of Mecklenburg-Schwerin.

work; and in the midst of my work I was disturbed by shouts and by a horrible noise. It was the maid-servant, who had an attack of nerves because she had quarrelled with my scamp of a servant. Then the land-lady came to see me. She told me a long rigmarole, and I had to calm her by promising that I would repri-mand the culpable party very sharply. I have just done so, and now perhaps things will be in order for a few days. It is all very amusing.

I harnessed the ponies yesterday to Croy's *coupé*. They were very sprightly and went as well as usual. I gave each of them a large piece of sugar, which they liked immensely. Everybody looks at them and speaks about them. People think them very sleek and fat to have come from a famished town. I should like to be able to send them to you, but I have nobody to whom I could entrust them, and I don't even know whether the railway would take horses now. If Götzen comes here as my Uncle writes, to look for Stanislas' body, I will ask his advice.

Nobody desires the bombardment more than I do, and I am tired of telling people that it would produce a great effect upon the Parisians, and upon all those who only ask for a pretext to raise their voice in favour of peace. It is to be hoped that some decision will be taken soon, despite all the influence which is being used against it—unhappily of a very powerful nature. Anyhow, there will soon be no excuse for putting it off, as before long we shall have 8,000 instead of 4,000 horses specially for this work.

I am very curious to see the deputation of the Reich-stag which should arrive this evening. Pless and Frankenberg dined with us last night: they confirmed all you say about Delbrück's clumsiness, and about the pitiable *mise-en-scène* of the whole affair. Still the thing itself is good, and will render great services, especially in the future. You can well understand that

I cannot enter into details in my letters. They might fall into the hands of some franc-tireurs. But I participate a little in your anxiety. A number of mistakes have been made since September 1st. There has not been sufficient foresight, and many unhappy people will have to pay for it with their lives. Still, I don't entertain any fears for the final result, unless events should supervene which were impossible to foresee.

If you see my aunt Landsberg, give her kind messages from me and ask after her son Egon. I am delighted that my photograph is liked. I was on the point of burning it, I thought it so hideous. . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 17, 1870

I can only send you a line to-day. Some important business has occupied me till now—2.30 p.m.; and the post-bag will be closed in a few minutes. Your letter of the 14th has arrived; and the caviar also and I am looking forward to eating it. . . .

I think I shall at last be able to go to Petit Val to take the money to Henry. It is difficult to get a conveyance. They ask me 120 francs for it. If I had a basket carriage I would go there with the ponies.

There is nothing new here. I have seen nobody since the day before yesterday, and do not even know if the deputation has arrived. . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 18, 1870

I received your nice letter of the 15th this morning and intended to write you a long letter in reply, but did not feel well. . . . If I can get a carriage I intend to go to Petit Val to-morrow morning. Poor Henry will be very pleased to get your letter, the money and the clothes; and the change of air and the exercise will

do me good too. You must not be at all anxious about me. . . .

I am glad that you have made the acquaintance of my aunt Landsberg and I am not surprised that you liked her. She is clever and as sharp as a needle. She has made her way very well. You must see Hugo and her together *en famille*. It is a real comedy.

I have nothing whatever to tell you, my pet, as I haven't seen a living soul for three days. The deputation will not interest me at all unless I happen to meet them. I think that the King is to receive them to-day at 2 p.m. Wittgenstein was to have left yesterday or the day before. He promised me he would call on you. People are very angry with him here. Do you know how he got his mistress out of Paris? I have just heard, but cannot guarantee the truth of the report. She got out by passing as Mme. de Gallifet! But don't say anything about this yet; it is not quite certain, and I should not like him to know that I told you. . . . How unlucky it is that I can't be back for Christmas!

I hope you will have a suitable tree and that you will give the children some nice presents. Unfortunately there is nothing worth having that I could send from here. When Paris surrenders I have a plan of my own that I intend carrying out, and perhaps you will get something then that you will like. Anyhow I shall think of all three of you, and hope that I shall not be forgotten. . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 19, 1870
(9 *a.m.*)

Before getting into the carriage to start for Petit Val I will write you a line so that you shall not pass a day without a letter. . . . I have just bought some boxes of sardines, some candles, etc., and will take

them to Henry with some cigarettes and one of your sausages.

I have tried everywhere to find some little trifle to send you for Christmas. I spent an hour in a bric-à-brac shop, but could find nothing worth sending—not even a figure, or a piece of old lace, or a fan! Nothing but enormous things that are far too large. In despair I enclose you the trifling sum of fifty thalers (£7 10s.) with which you must buy yourself something—a piece of furniture, or china, or some little ornament that you can place before the Christmas tree. I am anxious that you should do so, and want you to tell me immediately what you have chosen.

Enclosed is a letter from Henry for you that I received this morning. He is a bit exasperated just now, so you must not pay much attention to what he says. He is like all the French, who cannot understand that war has its rough side and one must submit to its inconveniences. As for the Château of Sucy,[1] which was entirely abandoned by its owners, and left open to everybody, it will naturally suffer a good deal, and unfortunately there is nothing to be done. . . . When I come back to-morrow I shall perhaps find a letter from your mother. It is Washburne's day. I will send it on to you at once. I hope we shall now soon decide to bombard the forts. . . .

It is said that there is a very good photographer here from Munich or Dresden, and we are thinking of having a large photograph taken with all the carriages and horses and all of us. It will be a nice souvenir. But, by the way, am I to have yours? You might send it to me for Christmas. . . .

[1] The property of M. de Ginoux, one of the neighbours of Petit Val.

VERSAILLES, *December* 20, 1870

I have just arrived from Petit Val—so frozen that I can't hold my pen—five hours *en route* in an open carriage.

Henry is well and Petit Val is quite safe and in good order. The house hasn't been touched at all, nor the park either with the exception of the two miserable sphinxes, which are a bit damaged. There are some soldiers in the summer-house, but I saw no trace of damage. Henry says that some furniture was injured and he has taken it all away now. Perrault's house is in a good state also. You see, therefore, that no harm has been done.

There are a number of officers there, all of them on the best of terms with Henry, who spends his days in shooting with them.

Last night I went to see the Curé. He complains a good deal, and partly unjustly, as Henry himself admits; this annoyed me, so that I only gave him your 300 francs, and will see about adding something later on. I think it is better so. . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 21, 1870

You have doubtless received my few lines that I wrote yesterday and you must now be quite at your ease about Henry and Petit Val. No harm has been done and I trust that we shall be able to keep the place in the same state up to the end of the war. As for the village and the other Châteaux, it is unfortunately another matter. I did not go to look at them, for I should have been pained to see them in their present state. I could do nothing for them.

You will probably receive this letter on Christmas Eve. I hoped to have enclosed a letter from your mother, but none came with Washburne's bag. You

need not be alarmed, however, at this silence. There was a letter from Curtis to his parents here in which he said that he had dined at the Rue de Courcelles and that they were all well.

Paris must look strange without gas! There is really no more gas there and only a few miserable oil-lamps light the streets. So that none of the restaurants or cafés are now open of an evening. The people must be very annoyed at this! Two of the forts fired a good deal last night and this morning it was said that an attempt at a sortie was made at two different points. I am beginning to think that this will not last much longer. From letters received from Paris they must have lost an enormous number of men on the 30th November and on the 2nd December. Paris is crammed with wounded soldiers; all the ambulances and several houses are full of them. It is absurd to let so many people be killed, when they must end by capitulating!

I am very sad, my dear Touti, at not being able to be with you and the children on Christmas Day. Your letter yesterday was absurd and you admit to-day that it was. How can you get such ideas into your head? You know quite well that I am very pleased to have another child, and that the only thing I was thinking about was, that the poor little dears wouldn't have enough money some of these days. If this very sordid thought offended you, I am glad you said so. You must be feeling relieved now; but you should not make yourself unhappy about trifles. . . .

Did you receive the letter I wrote you the day before yesterday? What did you buy for the children? I want to know. We shall have a tree here, but no presents. This will be more gloomy than if we had nothing at all. To console myself I shall think of you and the children, and I hope you won't forget me. . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 22, 1870

It is fearfully cold; I have been busy all the morning and feel heavy and tired, but I will write a few lines to you as usual. We went into the garden just now to see the eclipse of the sun. I am sure you did not even notice that there was one. We had a good view of it, but I must frankly admit that such things don't interest me much.

There was a small but unsuccessful sortie yesterday near Le Bourget. We captured about a thousand prisoners. At first the French took two villages, whose names I forget; but they were afterwards retaken. We lost at most a hundred men. It was mainly an artillery engagement and a number of horses were killed. The French had at least three divisions. We can't understand the object of these little attempts.

Our military authorities declare that there is not the slightest danger to be apprehended from the Loire. The French are scattered all over the country and are so demoralised that it would be difficult to re-unite them again. Some time would be necessary to rally them. Paris is the centre point now. I still hope that it will not be long before the city capitulates; especially if we begin to bombard it. I doubt that we shall do so before Christmas, but I hope it will take place before the new year. We shall then send them some crackers (*einige Knallbonbons*) as a New Year's gift!

Christmas Eve will be over by the time you get this letter and we shall each of us have had a dreary fête. They say we shall have a tree here, but I would rather we didn't. Anyhow I expect a detailed description of the evening you spent with the children—what the tree was like, where it stood, what you gave to everybody, what they said, and what you bought for yourself—in fact a very exact and detailed description. This will

have to be my Christmas: I attach great importance, you know, to Christmas.

I must leave you, my Darling, because the ponies are at the door and I don't like making them wait in the cold. . . .

I really don't know what I can do for M. Riondel.[1] There is no question of an exchange. We only want to exchange all at once, and the Paris Government raises difficulties about the exchange of French officers for our captains of merchant vessels.

VERSAILLES, *December* 23, 1870

You don't know how difficult it is sometimes to write a letter. I have been at the Chancery since noon. The Minister has sent for me three times for different trivial matters; I have had to wait till now; and now I have to go to the War Ministry and to the General Staff, and it is a quarter to three!

It is said that the town of Tours has hoisted the white flag and only wants to be occupied. We don't however want to enter it yet because there are French troops on the other side. There is nothing new to report from Paris. But I do not agree with you that this will last till February. Although I have no luck with my bets, I am prepared to bet that all will be finished in the course of the month of January. Let us hope so at least. Please tell Hugo that I have not yet lost my bet with him. We bet that the war would not last six months from the 1st of August, so that I still have to the first of February if I am not mistaken, but I think I shall lose. Who could foresee that the Emperor would fall in this manner? But for that, we ought to have had peace after Sedan and everything

[1] A prisoner of war, nephew of M. de Ginoux, the owner of the Château de Sucy. Cf. *supra*.

would have been over. But I shall be quite willing to pay if only we have peace.

I have inquired about the Perponcher affair that you spoke about. It seems that all the spoils were distributed amongst the courtlings, who sent waggon-loads thereof to their families at Berlin. I can quite understand that this did not make a good impression and am delighted that I was not in a position to participate in this booty. As far as the King is concerned, the matter is easily explained. He was told that as St. Cloud was the property of the State, everything that it contained belonged to him by right of conquest. As he did not wish to keep the things for himself, he distributed everything amongst the Princes and courtlings. . . .

It will be Christmas Eve to-morrow. How merry it will be ! ! ! Be sure not to forget to give me an exact description of the tree and of everything connected with it. This will afford me great pleasure. Guess how I am going to get a basket carriage ! I have ordered the police to find me one ! You must admit that it is a very original idea ! I am very sad, dear Touti, that I can't be with you and the children to-morrow. . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 24, 1870

When I was called to-day I got your nice letter of the 21st, which pleased me greatly and will serve as a Christmas present this evening. What a gloomy fête it will be ! At dinner I shall drink my glass of Champagne to your health and to that of the children, with my best wishes for your happiness and our speedy reunion. But I dare not believe that it will be soon. All the French are quite mad and they will have to suffer several more defeats to bring them to their senses.

There can be no question as to the sufferings of the

masses at Paris, but I think Trochu has energy enough to let them all die of hunger before he will surrender. According to all reports there is an inexpressible confusion at Bordeaux, and yet there is no prospect of change, and I should not be surprised if the army of the Loire were to take the offensive again. It will no doubt be beaten, but there will be enormous losses on both sides.

The main point now for us is Paris; and we must take that city at any price and as soon as possible. We should then be able to send the greater part of our troops from here to the south and we could go as far as the sea, if necessary. If the delegations of Bordeaux embark on some ship or take to flight in some other way; and if there should be no other Government in France capable or willing to treat for peace, we will form a Government ourselves by means of general elections or in some other manner. This would be less difficult than people think, because the population, once delivered from republican terrorism, would be quite ready to make peace.

We must therefore take Paris and I hope that in a few days we shall have resorted to serious measures in order to hurry on this result.

Yesterday Herr von Schwartzkoppen, Thérèse's friend, dined with us. He is going to be Préfet at Amiens or in the neighbourhood. He asked after her. She would be very angry if she knew he was going to play a part like this. . . . Good-bye, my love; I hope you will think of me to-night when the tree is lit up in my room. But I hope you won't be very sad on account of my absence. You must not think of the present nor of the past, but you must hope that in future we shall always be united with the children round the tree. Please don't forget that I expect a full description of the fête, and that I shall be impatient to know how it all went off. . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 25, 1870

I am in a furious rage! Just imagine! I have a portfolio, the second key of which is at the Chancery. I always send my papers to the Chancery in this portfolio when I work at home. The other day, before starting for Petit Val, I put my work and a letter for you in the portfolio, and told my servant to take it to the Chancery. I had something to send to-day, and when I opened the portfolio—lo! and behold! my letter to you and all the other things were still in it!

Now I understand why you were one day without news. It is all the more annoying because the fifty thalers for your Christmas present were in this letter. I can't even scold my servant, because I dismissed him a few days ago. All I can do now is to enclose the letter with the unfortunate fifty thalers, which you must spend as I told you, to buy something that you like.

Christmas was very melancholy last night. There was a tree after dinner, and Keudell gave each of us a box of good cigars that Bleichroeder[1] had given him for the purpose. The evening was spent as usual. I worked, drank a cup of milk (tea does not agree with me) and returned to my apartments at 11.30 and worked till 1 a.m. You see it was not very cheery! At dinner I drank a large glass of Champagne to your and the children's health. I hope the tree was pretty and that

[1] Herr Gerson von Bleichroeder, well-known banker in Berlin; nominated British Consul-General at Berlin in 1872. Under him the bank S. Bleichroeder acquired European reputation through its connection with the Rothschilds and the confidence placed in G. Bleichroeder by Bismarck. He played a part in Prussian finances in the early fifties, and through his advice money was forthcoming for the war of 1866. He was summoned to Versailles by Bismarck in 1871 to take part in the negotiations about the war indemnity; received prefix "von" in 1872. Died 19th February, 1893.

you were all cheerful and thought a little about me. I am awaiting with impatience the description of the fête. It is very sad that I have no letter from you to-day. It seems that the train was late and that the letters won't arrive till this evening.

I sent off some despatches to Washburne last night, and wrote a letter to your mother and put it into the bag with a line from Henry to her. I did not send Raymond's and Stone's letters with it. The former is very difficult to read and contains too much political news; and in the latter there were a number of letters addressed to French people. If I had sent them, I should have compromised myself, and you wouldn't wish for this.

The weather is horrible, and Mont Valérien has not stopped its cannonade. They say there was a small engagement yesterday in the direction where the Guards are posted, but I don't think it was of any importance. There is nothing new from the Loire. Waldersee, who has just come back, says that all is well down there. I must admit that this reassures me, for he understands his business, and I have great confidence in his judgment. . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 26, 1870

I received your note this morning with a letter from Mme. —— which I will send off on the first opportunity. I thought this morning that our communication with Paris would cease for some time. Our usual *parlementaire*, Herr von Uslar, was fired at despite the white flag. A man must have courage to carry letters to them. But I suppose they will send excuses and that the relations will not be interrupted. To-morrow morning I expect Washburne's bag. I hope there will be a letter from your mother in it, that I will send on to you. Have you read in the newspapers the story of

Wittgenstein making me a present of two charming little horses that were very well fed as a proof that Paris was in need of nothing? I had a good laugh.

It is true that there is still something to eat at Paris, but I think that the store of provisions is diminishing. They are beginning to make the bread of a worse quality by decree of the Government. They can't be revelling in plenty when they make up their minds to eat black bread which they detest. I think, too, that they have some horses still; but this state of affairs cannot go on for ever. It has lasted for a little over three months. In three weeks, if all goes well on the Loire, I think we shall see the white flag; and if so, I shall be really glad. . . .

Last night I received your letter of the 21st with the sleeve-links, which are very pretty and give me much pleasure. It was a very nice idea of yours, and they will be a delightful souvenir. You ought to have received the fifty thalers by now; I wonder what you will buy. . . .

People imagine that we are quite happy here, and instead of appreciating all the fatigue we are undergoing, they expect us to be grateful! It is a curious world, and, as Bismarck says:—"One is often tempted to turn republican." . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 27, 1870

I received your short note of the 24th this morning. I think you must have been tired and irritated and in a bad temper when you wrote it—I was very sorry about it. I hope that the weather has got fine again and that your good humour has returned.

I am very worried that this war is lasting so long, but I was pleased this morning when I heard that our cannons had commenced firing at one point. There were eighteen French guns at Mont Avron which were

firing to their hearts' content when all of a sudden they received our reply this morning from sixty or seventy heavy cannons. I should have liked to have witnessed their surprise! Unfortunately it is just on the other side of Paris, to the north of Fontenay-sous-Bois, seven leagues from here, so they say, so that it is not possible to go there. I hope we shall now begin at other points also, and perhaps a little nearer here. If successful, the end of their resistance must be hurried on.

Washburne's bag arrived just now, and there are a number of private letters, but nothing from your mother. . . . Amongst the letters was one from young Curtis, who gives the menu of a dinner he had with some friends on the 25th at Voisin's. It was as follows:—Potage St. Germain. *Entrées:* Côtelettes de loup chasseur; Rôti—Chat garni de rats rôtis, sauce poivrade; Rosbif de Chameau. *Entremets:* Salade de légumes—Ceps à la Bordelaise—Plum pudding au rhum. *Dessert:* none.

What do you say to that?

When I have finished this letter I shall go again to the War Ministry, where I have something to do. I will give Colonel Harlop a little note about M. Riondel. If it is possible to exchange him, I think it will be done. But there is some difficulty, because an exchange has been in general refused because of the captains of German ships, as I wrote to you. What makes things much more difficult just now are the numerous desertions of officers who are prisoners *en parole*. Our people are rightly indignant, and those who are with us will suffer from the measures of precaution that we are forced to take. It is really a disgrace to France that such things can happen without raising general disapproval. Have you read the statement of one of these officers? He says he does not consider himself obliged to keep his word because he was given a copy

of the Bonapartist newspaper *Le Drapeau!* All this sounds like a story from a dream! . . .

The weather is horrible; it is not very cold, but snow is falling. Impossible to ride or to take a walk. . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 28, 1870

I was looking forward with real pleasure to the description of your Christmas tree family-party that I had asked for, and your letter of the 25th, which arrived this morning only caused me pain. What is the matter with you? I cannot understand it. How is it possible that the word "absurd" could have vexed you? When I said the other day that you got absurd ideas in your head I meant that they were unjust and that there was no reason for them, and I think you ought to have been pleased instead of vexed at this!

I am really grieved to see you sad and discouraged again, when there is no reason for it. Come now—confess that you were irritable, that it was a fancy, and write and tell me that you no longer look at things from the dark side. If I don't receive a nice letter from you soon—one such as you know how to write if you choose—I will send in my resignation and will come to Berlin; and then it will be your fault if I give up this good career so full of fascination and hope. . . .

There is nothing new here. The bombardment of Mont Avron was not a complete success because the weather was rather dull. But it is a great gain that we have made a beginning, and I hope that we shall soon continue at other points. The *bourgeoisie* are suffering a good deal in Paris. I have just had a talk with an Abbé Bosquet, who left Paris during the engagement at Champigny; he told me that they had had no fresh meat for six days when he left. It is incredible that they should persist in holding out. It is

obstinacy not to yield when hunger stares them in the face. I hope the bombardment will serve as a pretext for them to admit that their honour has been satisfied. . . .

We have received a delightful pamphlet from Brussels:—*A dinner at Versailles at M. de Bismarck's*, by Mirande.[1] Try to procure it, for unfortunately I haven't got it. I figure in it as examining magistrate (*juge d'instruction*)! It will amuse you. This Mirande is one of the greatest *canailles* I have ever met. . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 29, 1870

I received your letter of the 26th this morning, and am sorry that I still don't find you in such a good humour as I should like.

I have had work to do up to now—3 p.m.—and shall not be able to write a long letter, especially as I have some official commissions to do before dinner. Besides, I had a scene just now that put me into such a rage that my nerves are still all on edge. Just imagine that an officer of the General Staff desired to see me in order to hand me a letter I had sent yesterday to Washburne, namely the one to your mother and some others sent with the permission of the Minister! I told him plainly that I should immediately report the matter to the Minister; that these letters enclosed in the official parcel to Washburne were not subject to the control of the General Staff; and that it was my business to decide what letters I chose to pass in this way; that I was only responsible to the Minister, who had ordered me to look after the correspondence with Paris, and that in a case of this kind I didn't even admit that I was under an obligation to give any explanation to the General Staff; that the fact alone that these letters were put by me into the official parcel was

[1] *Un dîner à Versailles chez M. de Bismarck*, par Mirande.

sufficient for the General Staff, and that I did not understand being required by the General Staff to account to them for my actions.

I was pale with rage and my poor Lieutenant did not know where to look. At last he said it was a misunderstanding; that they thought they had the right to inspect all private letters, even those in the official parcel.

The best of it was that I had said to the Minister yesterday that I was writing a private letter to Washburne, and that he ordered me to slip in a phrase for the sake of the French Government. So I had the advantage over them.

Now I am no longer surprised that I have had no letter from your mother. They intercepted my last letters and as she received nothing she did not reply. I won't tell the Minister anything about this yet, because he would be in a great rage about it, and he has enough to worry him as it is. But if the case recurs I will make a strong complaint, and if by chance the Minister does not back me up, I will beg him to put the Paris correspondence into the hands of somebody else. . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 30, 1870

I am freezing, so it will be difficult to write a long letter. As Washburne's parcel had not been despatched, I wrote him another private letter and enclosed yours to your mother. I had to go to General Blumenthal's, as the parcel was no longer with the General Staff. I made this long journey in the little open carriage we borrowed at Ferrières, and I am still frozen from the cold. . . .

You will have seen in the newspapers that the bombardment of Mont Avron was a complete success. The French retired, leaving a good deal of ammunition,

guns, etc., and all their numerous dead. I cannot form an opinion as to the importance of Mont Avron itself, but this shows that our cannons can fight against the big naval guns of the French, and that our artillery fires better. This induces us to hope that the forts will not be able to resist long, and I think that their fall will be the beginning of the end. I am afraid, with you, that the capture of Paris will not be the end of the war, but our position will be infinitely better. We shall be able to dispense with a large part of our army at Paris and then we shall be able to defeat the army of the Loire. In order to terminate the whole affair, that is to say, in order to conclude peace, we shall have to organise general elections or to form some sort of Government, if that of the Défense Nationale is blind enough about the interests of the Republic to refuse to do so indefinitely.

. . . . . .

Our group is frightful, I know, but it is an interesting souvenir of these six months of war passed in France. Please have a simple frame made for it and hang it up somewhere in my room. . . . The day after to-morrow we commence a new year. I shall drink your health, wishing you all that you can desire. For my part I hope we shall soon be reunited and that we shall never again be separated for so long. . . .

VERSAILLES, *December* 31, 1870

As the result of my drive in an open carriage I have the devil of a cold, and as I should not be able to get rid of it if I were to go out twenty times a day to cross the road to get to the office, I have sent word to say that I am ill. It is only a cold, so you need not be anxious. I am not sorry at having this pretext for remaining one or two days quietly in my room without hearing a word of business. I am sick of it beyond

description, so it is a real pleasure to remain at home a bit. The drawback is that I have a nasty sick headache and no books to read. I am reduced as regards the latter to *L'Illustration* and *L'Univers illustré*. We have the back numbers of several years, and I amuse myself by looking through them. Sometimes there is something interesting in them. The other day I came upon the fête given in 1864 to the King of Spain at Versailles in which I took part. What a difference between then and to-day! You were ill then, do you remember? Franziska Loë made a terrible scene because she had not been invited, and I had to make use of the full powers of my eloquence to get my old friend Bacciochi to set the matter right. . . .

You have not yet told me when you expect your confinement and what arrangements you have made. Don't forget to do so without delay. I want to come home then and to remain until you are quite well again. Don't think that I should regret going away from here. I am so disgusted when I see how little our efforts are appreciated that I only work now like a machine to satisfy my conscience, and I only do what is necessary. We have been working like dogs during this war; and what is the result? Nobody acknowledges the merit of our work. There isn't a wretched courtling nor a single aide-de-camp who has not been covered with decorations, although they have done absolutely nothing but eat and drink. At the General Staff and at the War Ministry, even at the Commissariat and at the Post Office, there is not a single official who has not long since received the Iron Cross. But nobody has even dreamt of us! The other day the Minister said that it was high time to think of our existence. And what was the result? The King sent the Cross to Abeken and Keudell. The Minister told me he would not yield, and that the King must give it to me. I made no answer, because I shall have no pleasure in

getting it now that it is given to everybody. In general I laugh at decorations; but in this case, people in Germany would think that we had been robbing or mutilating the bodies of the dead on the battlefields if we didn't get it. If people saw all the members of the General Staff returning with the Cross, whilst we were the only ones left out, they would have some reason for thinking that we must have done something to deserve being passed over like this. This is not the way to encourage people to devote themselves to their work and to sacrifice their night's rest and their health! I am now only doing what is absolutely necessary, and should not hesitate to ask for a holiday when you are confined. If they don't like it, well—*tant pis;* I should go away all the same and not return. I should not like however to leave before the surrender of Paris, and this is chiefly in your interest. If I were not there then, your parents would have nobody to look to for the safety of their house and to aid them to leave the city. . . .

I have just received a letter from Henry. He is very upset because the Préfet has asked him for taxes. I will look to that to-morrow or next day, when I go out. He is as French as Charles and Raymond, and very apt to complain when he has no ground for doing so. His last grievance is the heavy boots of the officers! He says they destroy the good silk furniture in the drawing-room. I suppose they would have to put on patent-leather boots in war time to please him! And yet they are very good and amiable to him. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 1, 1871

The new year has begun! I am very sad at being so far away from you and the children. I wish with all my heart that this year may prove a happy one for you in every way, and I hope especially that we shall soon

be reunited. What a horrid New Year's Day for many people who have lost their dear ones or who have been uncertain of their fate for months! We must thank Providence when we compare our situation with their sufferings. A separation for five months is very hard to bear, but we at least have the hope that we shall soon be together again; whereas lots of people are separated for ever. What a difference between this year's New Year's Day at Paris and New Year's Day in other years! Generally it is so animated, so noisy and so happy! . . .

From your letter of the 29th that I received this morning I infer that you are going to buy a pearl for your necklace. That is the best thing you could do. I suppose that a pearl as big as the large ones in your necklace will cost from seventy-five to eighty thalers. If you find a good one, you must take it and I will pay the difference. I am quite sure that we could buy pearl necklaces at Paris now for next to nothing. Unfortunately I can't think of getting them there now, as I have no one I could ask to do the commission for me. Next Tuesday I hope to get a line from your mother and will send it to you at once. Perhaps there will be a letter also from Washburne.

I am anxious to know when the bombardment will recommence and what will be the effect of it. A report said to be drawn up by Trochu has been received here saying that we have some new guns which did them a lot of harm at Mont Avron. They lost thirteen officers alone, which is an enormous number! Minister Delbrück, who came to see me a little while ago, tells me that it is not a report by Trochu, but an article from the *Moniteur Universel.* Anyhow it is clear that our artillery has made a very great impression on Paris, which is what I always predicted would be the case. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 2, 1871

Your letter of the 30th, that I have just received, did not please me. You say you are not in a bad temper, but that you feel sad. What for, in the name of Heaven? I can't understand this, and it grieves me. You might at least have told me the reason for it. I have been racking my brains, but can discover no reason, and you know how horrid it is for me when I know you are upset.

You seem to be in the mood for reproaching me and for being discontented. Engelbert has been foolish enough to tell you that I am ill and you immediately infer that you are "nothing" to me because I do not fill my letters with complaints about my health. Come now, is that right?

All you say about the character of this war is quite correct. It is simply terrible. But one must not forget that it was the French who began it and they are responsible for it. The saddest point of the whole matter to my mind is, that an intense hatred between the two nations will accrue therefrom and that it will not disappear for a very long time.

Trochu's idea to retire to Mont Valérien seems poetical but not practical. Admitting that he can retire there with five or six thousand men, what advantage will he derive from doing so? We shall surround him out of reach of his cannons. We shall not want an army for this purpose, and we shall simply wait till he has eaten up all his provisions. He won't prevent our taking Paris, and if he desires to bombard the city from that side, he is at liberty to do so. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 3, 1871

I can only write a line to-day. . . . I have just received your letter of the 31st, which gave me great pleasure because it was a nice one as all your letters

should be. . . . If you should feel ill let me hear *at once* and I will come to you immediately. . . . I have often told you that I am ready to go anywhere else if you wish it. I am not at all keen on remaining at Berlin, so we will go wherever you like. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 4, 1871

This morning I received a letter from "the genteel Wilhelm"[1] from Orléans, who begs me to make peace because he has had enough of the war and is bored with marching along the high-roads when he could amuse himself better in Berlin! His letter is dated January 1st and he says:—"The French have been beaten worse than is generally known and than you think. The day before yesterday (at Vendôme I think) 1½ French army corps tried without success to beat a single Prussian division and were driven back by the latter with more than they bargained for." All this is very nice to hear, but I should like it better if we could receive a request from Bordeaux or Paris to commence negotiations. I don't think we shall get as far as that until we have taken Paris. This is the essential point, and I sincerely hope that we shall leave nothing undone to attain it.

I wrote a line to Henry to-day to send him a letter from your mother and another letter from Brauschitsch (our Préfet here) in which he tells me that he immediately wrote to the Sous-Préfet of Corbeil to tell him to abstain in accordance with superior orders from any act of execution against Petit Val. He is thus again saved from disaster, because it is intended now to take rigorous measures against those who do not pay the taxes demanded of them. You will see, however, that Henry will continue to say that it was his presence there alone that saved Petit Val. But what would have

[1] Count Wilhelm Redern.

become of him if I had not been at the General Staff? So you see that our separation has been of service to you in one way, for you would have been very unhappy if Petit Val had been entirely devastated as has unfortunately been the case with so many other Châteaux. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 5, 1871

Your letter of the 1st arrived last night and set me at ease about your health, and this morning I received that of the 2nd, in which you say nothing of any kind of indisposition, so that I hope you feel quite fit again. The children's letter gave me pleasure: please kiss them for me. I hope that Nelly is good. . . . I particularly want her to acquire early serious ideas and tastes, so that she may become a well-informed young woman capable of occupying herself.

I have just been told that the bombardment of the forts situated on the southern side of Paris is to begin to-day. Unfortunately this is necessary in order to attain at what we are aiming at. I don't think it will last much longer if we can take and destroy some of the forts. Of course there will be another attempt to effect a sortie; but if it be repulsed, as is sure to be the case, their resistance ought to finish soon. Perhaps they will try to resist a few days longer with the aid of the guns from the ramparts; but when they see the shells falling into the city itself they will soon have enough of it.

I have just written to our good Mélanie, who is persecuting me with letters begging me to protect her friend Narischkin and to send some letters to Paris from a certain Jesuit. She concludes her last letter with the hope that we shall all be at Reichardshausen this summer. I replied that I should be very pleased to be at Reichardshausen or anywhere else on the Rhine.

I am quite serious in this. As soon as I get back, it will be one of the first things I shall do to look out for a house in that part of the country where you can spend the summer pleasantly with the children, for you must not think of Petit Val this year. Even your mother does not seem to want to go there, and perhaps she will come to you on the Rhine. While she is with you I can go to Kissingen for a "cure" and will join you afterwards.

I pity you, having 18° of cold at Berlin! It is really very hard on you, but still I should like to see your anxiety lest you should get a red nose! Everything here is white with snow and rime, but it is not so very cold. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 6, 1871

When I was called, your letter of the 3rd was brought to me, in which you say you are much better. That's all right. I saw Holstein yesterday. To my great astonishment he came to my rooms. I thought he was at Berlin. He says that he has seen you pretty often and that you looked well and were not too impatient. He made me laugh by telling me that you are making a good many inquiries about a certain Comtesse de la ——, an old adventuress who goes about here throwing her cap at all the officers. Is this true? Will you never improve on this point???

Last night we were to have made up a parcel of despatches for Washburne and to have sent it off this morning; but owing to the bombardment and the military operations it will not be sent. Anyhow I think the usual exchange of despatches will take place on Tuesday. The other day your father sent me a letter to show me that there was plenty of wood for fuel in Paris. It only proves, however, that there is a good store of it, and that some families get it; as a matter



Count Hatzfeldt
Versailles 1871.

of fact, the great majority are in need of it, and are suffering a good deal from the cold.

Issy was bombarded yesterday, but I don't know the result. Mont Valérien is the essential point, in my opinion. If we can dislodge them from there, they will begin to lose courage, because this point is considered impregnable. Even after the bombardment of Mont Avron, Jules Favre assembled the Maires of Paris to ask them if he should go on offering resistance. They voted in the affirmative, but circumstances may make them change their opinion from day to day. I am awaiting the end with an impatience impossible to describe. . . .

January 7, 1871

I have received your note of the 4th and can only send you a line to-day because I was kept awake during part of the night by a sick headache, and so got up very late.

Holstein came to see me last night, and told me, to my great pleasure, that the military big-wigs expect now that Paris will surrender in ten or twelve days. How delightful it will be! I hope they will not be wrong! This coincides with my own estimate. I think they will not hold out longer than the 15th or 20th, and that want of provisions together with the bombardment will make them yield about this time.

We cannot yet confirm it with absolute certainty, but the story goes that the bombardment is producing a greater effect than was anticipated. Nogent on the other side and Issy on this side only replied yesterday in a very feeble fashion to our cannons. It is possible we shall capture them very soon, but we shall have to be very prudent on account of the mines. As soon as we have got a few forts and can throw our shells into the city itself, I think the inhabitants will have had enough of it.

I took a walk yesterday for a good half-hour, and am feeling well, though I don't say so, lest I should be obliged to pass all my time at the Chancery. There is to be a dinner-party this evening at Prince Karl's and a concert: I sent an excuse. It is the first fête of this kind that we have had since we have been at Versailles. It is said that Mme. Pazzini sings well. The snow has disappeared and it is warm. I think I shall be able to give myself out as well to-morrow. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 8, 1871
(*Sunday*)

Your letter of the 5th has just arrived. Everything is quiet here, at least one hears nothing except a few cannon-shots. It is said that all is going on well. I expect there will be a last sortie. It is certain that the populace wants it and perhaps Trochu won't be able to refuse, although he knows that it can lead to nothing. I am afraid they won't yield yet; and that when one or more of the forts are taken, they will retire within the town, and we shall then be forced to bombard the town itself. This would be very sad but inevitable if they should persist in holding out.

Fighting has been going on for two days where General Manteuffel is. This time we attacked. I am told that the news about this is good. I am not surprised at what you tell me of the Emperor's[1] dejection. But it is a mistake to suppose that we desire to restore the Empire. We have not made any decision upon this point, as far as I know, and should only be guided by our own interests. We will make peace with any Government recognised by the country that offers the necessary guarantees. There is no reason for excluding the Imperial Government if it is strong enough to retain power; but that is its affair—not ours. We have

[1] Napoleon.

no reason for interesting ourselves in what is best for the good of France, or for sacrificing a single man for securing any particular Government or for preventing another from assuming the reins of power. This is the correct line of policy for us to take up. Bismarck has not confided to me his views on the subject, but I hope that this is the way he looks upon it.

Holstein came to see me just now and asked me to lay his respects at your feet, adding that there must be plenty of room there "just now." In fact the young married ladies at Berlin must now really be in want of a few "flirts." No doubt they regularly fight for the two or three men below fifty who are left there. I suppose that Herbert Bismarck will become very self-conceited if the war lasts much longer. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 9, 1871
(2 *p.m.*)

I have only time to send a line to-day. Henry surprised me by coming to see me, and he stopped the night and has only just left after having written letters the whole morning at my writing-table.

Yesterday evening I went out after sending off my letter to you, and had a good turn with Maltzan and Pless, whom I met by chance. On returning I found Henry, and, instead of lying down to rest as I felt inclined to do, as I was very tired, we chatted and dined together; afterwards an officer, whom I know, came, and then Minister Delbrück. We remained chatting till midnight. The bombardment continues and will very soon be carried on with greater vigour. A Paris newspaper of the 6th says that the cannon-balls have cut the trees in the Jardin du Luxembourg and have thus done away with the necessity of having them hewn down. Some conflagrations have been seen on that side in seven different places, and one could even

perceive the inhabitants hurriedly removing their furniture from their houses. But they were only stray shells, for up to now we are not aiming at the town itself, the order being merely to bombard the forts; but the batteries have fired a few shots a bit further off for fun. It is said that the Crown Prince is very annoyed at this.

I haven't seen anybody this morning yet, so that I know nothing of the fighting that is going on in the neighbourhood of Vendôme. It will be very bloody, for there is certainly an understanding between Trochu and the others. We shall soon have another sortie. I still think that this condition of things will not last longer than the 1st of February, but I regret, for the sake of the Parisians, that they are waiting so long; for if they had capitulated sooner, they would probably have had much better terms than they will have by waiting to the last minute.

The day before yesterday I was to have dined with Prince Karl, and to-day with the King. I have had to give up these pleasures. Somebody said that the fat Dönhoff must have heard of my indisposition and that he counted on my refusal. I don't know if it was the same with Perponcher, and yet what I have so far eaten and drunk at the King's table has not cost him much. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 10, 1871

No letter this morning: very annoying. They say that the post is late and that we must wait till this evening. My whole day is spoilt when I don't find a letter by the side of my bed when I wake in the morning.

The snow is a foot high out of doors, and all the houses and trees are quite white. Still it is not cold and the thermometer is four degrees above freezing

point. I am going to dress myself quickly and to take a little walk. Don't for a moment think I am imprudent. Dr. Lauer,[1] the King's physician in ordinary, advised me to do so. At the same time he "had the kindness" to prescribe me a medicine "which he made up for me alone"!

I hear a good deal of firing to-day which proves that I was not misinformed when I was told that the attack would commence with greater energy on the 10th. . . . People are satisfied here with the result of the bombardment. So far Washburne's despatches have not arrived. The ground the *parlementaires* have to cross is commanded by the cannons on both sides, so that it is possible that people won't venture on so dangerous an expedition. Anyhow, if I receive any news from Paris I will send it on to you at once.

We are having disgusting weather. One day there are eight or ten degrees of cold and the next five degrees of heat. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 11, 1871

How shall I describe to you the joy I felt when Abeken rushed into my room yesterday at 2 p.m. and congratulated me, holding Thiele's telegram in his hand? At first I thought I had misread it; but Thiele would not have telegraphed if it had not been true. The chief thing was of course the assurance that you were well. Now that I have become a little calmer, I am very happy that all passed off well, and that the

[1] Gustav von Lauer, born 1807; in 1864 Surgeon-General of the Prussian Guards Corps; 1879 Surgeon-General of the Army; 1870–1 attached to the King's Head-quarters. In 1844 Dr. Lauer was appointed Physician-in-Ordinary to the then Prince of Prussia, and remained as Physician-in-Ordinary when the Prince became King, and continued so until his sovereign's death in 1888. In 1866 he received the right to the prefix "von," the symbol of *petite noblesse*, which corresponds to gentility in Great Britain. He died in 1889.

terrible moment is over; but I feel very sad at not having been with you whilst you were suffering. I fully intended asking for a holiday to go to nurse you, as I don't imagine that I am necessary here. You know that you are the chief person for me, and I should have liked to have been able to nurse and entertain you during the tiresome weeks that follow the critical moment. You had no member of the family with you and were quite alone, so that I should have liked to have been with you.

When I received the news yesterday I was on the point of writing to Bismarck to ask him for a holiday so that I could start to-day. The only thing that prevented me from doing so, without knowing your wishes and what you would think of it, was the uncertainty in which I am as regards Paris. It is possible that things will continue as they are for some little time, and it is not impossible that Paris will surrender in eight or ten days.

One can't foresee what the conditions of capitulation will be and whether the troops will enter or not. But it is very probable that at first the inhabitants will not be allowed to quit the city; in which case, as it will probably not be very pleasant to be there, I might be useful to your family in letting them leave Paris, or in some other way. Before leaving, therefore, I wanted to hear what you thought of it. If you wish me to come to you, and if you think that by my doing so the time of your trial will pass quicker and that you will feel less dull and will get well again sooner, send me a telegram and I will ask for a holiday at once. I hope, dear Touti, that you are pleased at having another little girl. I assure you I am very pleased. You know my opinion on this subject—that one should never upset oneself by wishing for a girl or a boy, and that one must be satisfied with what Providence sends one. If I had had the choice, I should have chosen a girl. I am

also glad for you, as a mother always has more pleasure from a girl than from a boy, and then too she will be a companion later on for Nelly. I hope that arrangements have been made for christening her privately—the regular baptism we can have after my return, if possible. Choose the names yourself, dear Touti. As for the sponsors, I suggest Mélanie and perhaps Hugo or one of the other cousins. If we want to be polite, we can ask Alfred. But it shall be exactly as you wish. Only let me know what you desire, and I will write and ask him.

I received a telegram from the doctor yesterday. It made me easy, as it said that you were going on well, and that Gräfin Moltke[1] was with you. I thank her most warmly for all her kindness and for the way she has taken care of you. I hope Frau von Prillwitz will look after you a bit, and will send me some news of you. Should there be nobody in the house who can write, get Big Tom[2] or your maid to do so. Be sure to see that I get a letter *regularly every day*. And I want you not to follow the Berlin custom, but to do as Campbell prescribed, namely, to remain a full fortnight in bed without moving and at least a week on your chaise-longue. . . .

A thousand tender kisses with all my heart, and kisses to my three children ! !

VERSAILLES, *January* 12, 1871

I received your letter of the 9th this morning. . . . Let me know at once if you wish me to come to you. People here will perhaps be a little surprised if I ask for leave, and Bismarck, whom I saw yesterday for a moment, did not seem to suspect that I would. But for all that, he would be sure to give me a few days'

[1] Mother of Gräfin Perponcher, Frau von Danckelmann, and Frau von Prillwitz—three well-known beauties of Berlin society in those days.

[2] The English nurse of Gräfin Hatzfeldt's elder daughter.

holiday to be able to greet you and to see for myself that all was well and that you had all you want.

I do not suppose that I am at all indispensable here, so that nobody could be offended at my going; besides, you know that in a matter affecting you, no considerations whatever would hold me back. So, my dear, as soon as I know that you desire it, I will try to start without delay. . . . I should like to hear something about the baby. What is she like? I hope there is no chance of her resembling me, and that she will have the sense to be like you! What is the shape of her ear? A very serious question! And of her hands and feet? I should like to know, as I can't see her for myself! . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 13, 1871

At last I have received the letter that Gräfin Moltke has had the great kindness to write to me. I was looking forward to it with the greatest impatience. . . . It has calmed me a good deal. . . .

People seem to think that Paris will not hold out longer that a week or ten days. I can't give an opinion on the matter and don't dare to believe it; but it would be a great blessing for all of us and for me most of all. Poor Paris must be looking very sad! There are no trees either on the boulevards, or in the Champs Elysées or in the Jardin des Tuileries! Those in the Bois de Boulogne and in the Bois de Vincennes have been long since cut down.

I am delighted that my little daughter is pretty and that you are pleased at having a daughter. We always have the same ideas; you will have seen from my last letters that I also preferred a daughter. How is Nelly behaving? Is she glad to have a little sister? And baby? I must call him Hermann now to distinguish him from the new one. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 14, 1871

I was a little anxious this morning as to whether I should get a letter, and was right glad when I saw Gräfin Moltke's handwriting. I can't thank her sufficiently for all her kindness. Thank God that the news she gives me is excellent. . . .

I haven't heard a single cannon-shot this morning, and am a bit surprised. Perhaps they are not firing because of the mist, or perhaps we do not hear anything as the wind may be contrary. When I have finished my letter I shall go out to find out the news. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 15, 1871

The letter of the 12th from our excellent friend Gräfin Moltke arrived this morning and gave me great pleasure. I don't know what would become of me if I didn't get news every day. I should like to telegraph to you from time to time, but this is unfortunately impossible. Private telegrams are not forwarded as the wire is overcharged with official telegrams. For an important matter I should not be refused to send a telegram over the Minister's wire, but much astonishment would be expressed if I were to ask without a good reason. I must therefore resign myself to the inevitable. Happily your letters arrive regularly. . . .

I heard from your mother yesterday. The letter was dated the 13th. She was very sad about the bombardment, which seems to have done a great deal of harm in the Faubourg St. Honoré. . . . The French made some unsuccessful little sorties yesterday at different places. There will be some more, for I think that Trochu will be obliged to make another grand effort. It will be the beginning of the end. I still hope that the King will decide to return to Berlin after the surrender of Paris. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 16, 1871

I have just been called and have received Gräfin Moltke's letter. I shall be in a good temper all day! . . .

We are sending off some letters to-day for Washburne. The letters for the Marquise de Béthisy that I recommended very warmly have been passed and will go to-day. But unfortunately I could not render the same service to our friend Richard Metternich, who wrote to me from Bordeaux and sent me a mass of letters for poor Khevenhüller and the Austrian Consul. The letters are closed and the authorisation to send them was flatly refused. Mr. Odo Russell, who sent them to me, forgets that we have the right to open them. I have written to Richard to ask him if I may open them; if not, I must send them back to him. He won't like this, but it is a bit silly for an ambassador to send sealed letters! Besides, there is a mistake in spelling in the letter he wrote me in German, and of course Bismarck, to whom I had to show it, discovered it at once!

Bleichroeder sent me to-day two cases of excellent cigars; it was very kind of him. . . . I went out yesterday, despite the extreme cold. I went to the park to see the skating on the big lake, and met our good friend Solms with Mme. Cordier on his arm. Trochu has decided not to allow her to re-enter Paris. She told me that Richard was spending his days at Tours fishing with a rod and line to Hoyos' great despair. Hoyos said:—"He caught two little white fish the first day. It was very unfortunate, because you can't get him away from it now!" Isn't that like our good friend? He would say:—"I don't care what happens as long as I can amuse myself." The Princess is at Vienna. . . . The small newspapers at Vienna already contain the same attacks against her that used

to be in the Paris papers. By way of a change she is organising some lotteries that are hostile to us and friendly for the French. She is always the same! The weather here has completely changed since last night. It is raining and is hot. . . .

You must not expect any news about the siege or the bombardment to-day. I know nothing whatever about it. There is not a cannon-shot to be heard, and if it were not for the military band which is playing hard by, one might easily think we were living in the piping times of peace. Unfortunately I fear that we are still pretty far from this happy state. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 17, 1871

I can't complain to-day, for I have received three letters instead of one—yours, one from Gräfin Moltke and one from Mme. Arapow. All three tell me that you are well. . . . I am very pleased and happy to hear this, and hope that things will continue in this fashion until I am able to return and to make the acquaintance of Mlle. Marie Augusta Césarine Mélanie. Why Augusta? Have you turned courtier? and is it to flatter the Queen? I should be surprised at that from you! Although I am less of a courtier than ever, I won't offer any opposition if it pleases you.

I fell into the claws of my illustrious chief yesterday: he discovered me calling on Bismarck-Bohlen, who is still ill. He inquired after my health and asked me if I could write something for him. As I said I could with some eagerness, he sent me several things without a moment's delay, with the result that I was obliged to write thirteen pages in French! The last thing (ten pages long) he sent me at eleven o'clock at night, sending word to me that he would like to have it in time for the post to-day. Instead of that, I sent it to him so that he got it when he woke up, for I did the whole

during the night. I worked till three o'clock this morning, a thing I have not done for a long time. . . .

Everybody here asks after you, especially my chief and all my colleagues, Lehndorff, Alten, Solms—in fact everybody I meet.

We don't hear cannon-shots any longer, but this, I am told, is because of the wind, which comes from a contrary quarter. I am beginning to think that Paris will surrender one day when we least expect it. God grant that this sad war will soon end. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 18, 1871

To-day is a big day; and, despite my laziness and dislike of crowds, I have decided to do what everybody else will do—at noon we shall meet in the Grand Gallery of the Palais de Versailles, where there will be a religious function, after which the King will declare that he accepts the imperial crown of Germany. It is a historic event of great importance, and it will be an interesting recollection to have taken part in it. One is so *blasé* now about big events that nothing seems extraordinary; and yet the proclamation of the German Empire in the palace of Louis XIV. is a very curious incident! If the latter, who was one of our greatest enemies, has any feelings at all up above, he will have a very *mauvais quart d'heure* to-day!

No letter from Paris. Your mother is sulky with me because of the bombardment. This seems very absurd, but so it is. Schleinitz has been here for several days. He has not been near me. This is not very kind of him, but I shall doubtless see him at to-day's ceremony.

I have just been interrupted by a letter that has been brought me from the Chancery. Just imagine! It contains the Iron Cross! It has really been decided to give it to us also—Bismarck-Bohlen and me. The former will be in ecstasies; he has been unable to eat

or drink because he had been excluded from this numerous brotherhood! As for me, I should have liked to get it, if it had not been given to everybody. Now that it has been distributed right and left, and that the Minister had to interfere, in order to get over certain difficulties, it leaves me perfectly calm. There is only one advantage in it now, that it will prove when we get back that we have done nothing disgraceful during the war. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 18, 1871
(4 *p.m.*)

I have just been told that we are sending another courier to Ligny who will arrive before the train leaves, so I can send you another line. At 11.30 I went to the Palais with the ponies; they produced their usual effect. The whole Grande Gallerie des Glaces was full, and at the end of it there were some standards on a kind of platform. After a long delay the King arrived with all the Princes. There was some religious music and a sermon that I thought would never come to an end; just like all the sermons that I have ever heard. Afterwards, the King took up his position on the platform with all the Princes. We could see that he was much moved; he kept on twirling his moustache, which is the surest sign that he is so. After reading a kind of declaration, he ordered Bismarck to read his proclamation. Then the Grand Duke of Baden stepped forward and, after obtaining permission to do so, shouted:—"Long live his Imperial and Royal Majesty the Emperor William!" The shouts that followed made the Grande Gallerie shake. Louis XIV. most certainly turned in his coffin at this moment! The King, or rather the Emperor, moved towards the Princes. The Crown Prince fell on his knees in order to kiss his hand. The King raised him and kissed

him affectionately, and afterwards kissed Prince Karl and the Grand Duke of Weimar. He shook hands with the others. Prince Luitpold of Bavaria did not appear to be very delighted with what was going on! After all this we defiled past his Majesty, each of us making a bow of a more or less ludicrous kind, and then the band struck up again. We drew up in two lines, one on each side, and the Emperor left, passing between the lines. As he passed me, he asked me if I had recovered, and was as kind as ever. We all left after he had gone. This is an account of the grand historic event; I'm glad I did not miss it.

I have seen Schleinitz, who excused himself for not having been to see me; he said he had had so much to do. I was still at lunch when he was announced. I suspect that he came more to recommend a nephew whom he wants to have appointed Préfet than to see me.

If you read the newspapers, you will see that General Werder[1] fought a big battle yesterday and did very well. The French were completely routed after having obtained some advantage at first. General Werder thinks they have had enough of it now.

There is nothing new from Paris. The Corps Diplomatique has been foolish enough to take some steps against the bombardment. The *Moniteur de Versailles* of to-morrow will contain our answer. I will send it to you. I don't think the diplomatists will like it. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 19, 1871

My second letter of yesterday's date was forgotten at the Chancery. I send it to you to-day. It is very annoying that the post has not arrived, for I have no

[1] General Graf von Werder, born 1808; was on the Staff of the 3rd Army (the Crown Prince's) in 1870. After the battle of Wörth he was given the command of the army besieging Strassburg, and forced that city to capitulate. When he returned in 1879 he was made a Graf. He died in 1887.

news of the 16th in consequence. I have just been told that the French are making a grand sortie and that all the troops are marching out of the city. I should like to go to see what is taking place. What good luck that they did not think of this yesterday during the ceremony at the Palais when all the Generals were assembled there! Lest they should conceive the idea of doing so, we omitted firing any cannon-shots during the ceremony, which would otherwise have been done. They might have thought that it was the cannons from Chanzy, and have tried to join them. You know that I have been expecting a big sortie. Trochu can't well act otherwise, if he doesn't want to lose his authority. But I dare not think that it will take place to-day. Perhaps it is only one of those unimportant sorties that they go in for sometimes against the batteries that worry them. We shall see, and I will tell you to-morrow.

The weather has been very mild for two days. It rains occasionally and I think it was this that enabled Trochu to send his men out. He did not feel inclined to do so whilst it was so cold. If this weather continues, we shall have some more sorties. I cannot imagine that Paris will hold out long, but it is difficult to say how long she will resist.

I am dining with his Majesty the Emperor to-day! This is the result of my going out yesterday.

VERSAILLES, *January* 20, 1871

The Parisians made a tolerably big sortie yesterday, as you will have seen in the papers. At 2 p.m. I drove with Bismarck to the Aqueduct at Marly, where we met the King-Emperor and all his retinue. But the fighting was all but over and it was too dark to see far. All we could see was the firing of the batteries, which was still pretty lively.

The attack was repulsed however without any serious loss and we took some hundred prisoners, including a captain of Zouaves, who says that sorties will take place for five successive days and that the army has provisions for forty-five days. This seems to me to be an exaggeration. It is quite certain that everything is very quiet to-day and that the French troops retired leaving only a few advanced vedettes. People say that they are not fighting with the same ardour as they did at first.

I don't think this will be the last sortie.

Last night I dined with the Emperor, who was very gracious as he always is. He inquired after you. The ponies amuse him a good deal. He says they were intended to be eaten, and he wants to taste them. "As you don't offer them to me," he said, "I expect you to let me taste them!" I replied that I should be pleased to let him have some cutlets from them. Meanwhile the poor creatures are getting on very well and are daily increasing in fitness. I shall have them harnessed presently and then they will get their accustomed piece of sugar.

After dinner I spent the evening at Lehndorff's (without gambling) and saw Reuss and Croy there; they walked home with me as far as my door. Croy is horribly bored and clamours for the end of the war. He left this morning for his quarters and sends you his compliments.

Whilst we were at Lehndorff's a telegram came from General Göben announcing the victory near St. Quentin. Four thousand prisoners more and some cannons! If this goes on much longer we shall have to purchase an island somewhere where we can put the prisoners. There really is no more room for them in Germany. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 21, 1871

I have just received your nice letter of the 18th, which shows me that you are going on well. . . .

Yesterday's sortie was a complete check for Paris. The French could not get through anywhere. They did not take a single cannon and they lost a lot of men. The proof thereof is that Trochu asked for an armistice of forty-eight hours yesterday to look for his dead and wounded. I do not think that so long a time will be granted, because experience has shown us that they take an unfair advantage of every concession.

It was remarked that the French troops re-entered Paris yesterday with their bands playing at the head of the regiments; and we are quite sure here that they will make the Parisians believe that they have had a great victory. They are quite capable of adding that it was we who humbly begged for an armistice. We lost 400 men and 20 officers, whereas it has been proved that the French losses were at least 1,000 dead and wounded besides the 500 prisoners that we took.

It turns out that Göben's victory was more important than was thought. He took St. Quentin and 7,000 prisoners and the Minister of War is in despair as to what he shall do with them! Bourbaki has been defeated too. We have now only to await the surrender of Paris, which must soon come.

Putbus chatted yesterday with some of the prisoners, who of course tell all kinds of stories. But they complain a good deal of their food and are all furious with Trochu. One of them said of him: "He is no more a General than I am!" He will soon be accused of treason like all in France who get beaten. It is impossible to understand how men are still to be found to devote themselves to the service of these fools, when this is the sort of treatment they are certain to get if they do not succeed. . . .

I am sending you the *Moniteur de Versailles* although it is the most stupid and worst-written newspaper that I know of. It contains to-day our letter to Jules Favre in which we refuse him a safe-conduct, also another letter in reply to the communication of the Corps Diplomatique of Paris about the bombardment. You will find some rather complicated sentences in it of which I am wholly innocent. The first draft was drawn up in German and it had to be translated. This always presents difficulties as regards style; and then the French draft was corrected, amended, and then corrected again by the Minister, who added some phrases of his own. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 22, 1871

I have just received four more long pages from you, which makes me tremble a bit for your eyes, which are already so weak! . . .

I dined yesterday for the first time with the others. As there were a good many of us, the dinner lasted over two hours. I heard from General Voigts-Rhetz, the Commandant of the town, who was there, that poor Lareinty was taken prisoner with all his men. It was he who remained at St. Cloud after the retreat of the French. They drew up some cannons in line before the house and forced him to surrender. The General gave me a permit and I went immediately after dinner to the Palais de Justice, where I found Lareinty in a little room with all his officers eating and drinking and chatting to their heart's content. He received me in a grand style and told me in dramatic tones of all that he had done and of his misfortune. I thought I was at the theatre! They asked me to obtain permission for them to leave; but I can't possibly do anything for them, as the authorities are too angry with the French officers to grant them any further favour. So many of them have made their escape. All I can do is to send

a letter to Mme. de Lareinty, who is at Jersey, if he sends me one for her.

Yesterday the attack commenced on the St. Denis side with about sixty-nine or seventy cannons. It is to be hoped that this place will soon be taken. If we succeed, Paris will be between two fires, so it is to be hoped that they won't hold out much longer, even if they take refuge in the catacombs as the newspapers say they intend to do. Your mother is sulky because of the bombardment of the "holy" city. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 23, 1871

Another day without a letter! The rascals have blown up a bridge between Nancy and Epernay, and the post has not arrived yet. You must not be angry if my letter is shorter than usual. Just as I was going to begin to write, the Minister sent for me and I was obliged to pay several important visits in the town. . . .

I dined yesterday at the Préfecture, but his Imperial Majesty was not there. He had gone to dine with the Grand Duke of Oldenburg. It was what they call "Marschallstafel" (*i.e.* Dinner of the Household), in other words, we were invited to dine with Pückler and Perponcher. The latter placed me next to himself and overwhelmed me with politeness! We were about twenty at table—it was in honour of Schleinitz, who leaves to-morrow I think.

There is nothing new or interesting to tell you. I received a letter from Lareinty, and would have gone to see him again, but I have just been told that he has left for Germany. Of course he asked me to do a lot of things for him. He named the town he wanted to go to, and asked to have certain specified officers left with him. Real French modesty! I will do what I can, but that isn't much. I really have no particular desire to be agreeable to the French officers. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 25, 1871

I wanted to write you a long letter and after all I am obliged to hurry off a line only, in order to catch the post. It seems as if the Minister sent for me on purpose yesterday, and to-day also just as I was going to begin my letter, to give me something to do for him. . . . On both sides there is less firing. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 26, 1871

I must write in a hurry as I did yesterday, for I am waiting for a message from the Minister which will necessitate my going out.

This morning the photographer took a group of us which will perhaps be better than the last one. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 27, 1871

You must not be astonished or angry if I only write you a line to-day. I have been *en route* since nine o'clock this morning. I have two people to look after that I cannot leave. They are now in the *salon* writing too; and I am utilising the time for sending a line to you. . . .

Yesterday evening] Bismarck-Bohlen and I made a curious excursion. We left here at nine o'clock and drove to Chaville to General Thiele's, and from there we proceeded on foot along the railway as far as a country house belonging to Mme. de Bussière, which is in a sad state. We climbed up on to a pretty high tower in the Château, from which the view would have been splendid if it had not been quite dark. But it was very interesting. We saw the town of St. Cloud burning in the distance (the Château has long since disappeared), and heard the trains of the Chemin de fer de Ceinture and the firing of the cannon. Each

shot was preceded by a kind of lightning effect. I don't regret having been there, although the walk was long and difficult. It was not cold and by midnight I was back again. . . .

Good-bye: I must go and see what has become of my two strangers. I can imagine your wanting to know who they are; but I can't tell you—not for fear of your mentioning their names, but lest the franc-tireurs should get hold of my letter and should read it before you do. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 28, 1871
(*noon*)

I shall be fully occupied with conferences and other business till three or four o'clock, so that it is very probable that I shall not be able to write a letter. I cannot possibly tell you *more* just now. Let us hope that the war won't last much longer and that we shall soon see one another again. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 29, 1871

You can have no idea how busy I have been the last three days! From nine o'clock in the morning to three o'clock in the night I haven't had a moment to myself—not even time to wash my hands for dinner. It is enough to drive one raving mad!

The armistice was signed last night, as you already know. I read the text of the Convention to Bismarck and Jules Favre before it was signed. And now I am literally besieged by French engineers who are charged with revictualling the city. I am doing all I can, for it is a matter of *extreme urgency*. Of course they waited till the last moment. The supply of bread would have been exhausted in a few days.

To-day I suggested to your mother that she should leave Paris for a few days. I don't know what she will

decide to do. D'Hérisson,[1] whom I saw yesterday, told me that St. Priest and Khevenhüller are well. Good-bye: it is three o'clock and I have not yet had my lunch, and I have an appointment now at the General Staff. I don't know when I shall have a moment for eating.

The Minister has just summoned me. . . .

VERSAILLES, *January* 30, 1871

I have just received your letter of the 27th. . . . You can form no idea of the sort of life I have been leading since these last negotiations began. I haven't had a moment's rest the whole day. I came home last night as tired as a dog at one o'clock with the intention of resting this morning. But do you think I was able to? At nine o'clock my bell began to ring, and a whole row of people came in wanting something from me. The Minister kept on sending for documents or for some work that I had begun; and at last I began to dress myself in order to get rid of them all.

Since noon I have been at the Chancery working like a nigger; and it is now nearly four o'clock. I have been interrupted twenty times since I began this letter. There are a dozen people standing round me, gesticulating and asking me questions.

You can imagine what I look like, longing to strike the table in my own peculiar fashion. And when I am annoyed I get into a rage, as you well know.

Well! let us hope that this will have an end like everything else. One must not forget that we are here in the midst of most interesting events; the annoyance one has to put up with is nothing compared with the pleasure of having played a part here. . . . You must not be angry with me if my letters are short during these days. . . .

[1] Aide-de-Camp to M. Thiers.

VERSAILLES, *January* 31, 1871

Only two lines in great haste. I have received your letter of the 28th and am glad to hear you are well. No news from Paris except that Mlle. wants a safe-conduct to go to Petit Val. I am quite well, but have so much to do that I don't know which way to turn! If things last another week like this I shall hang myself! . . .

VERSAILLES, *February* 1, 1871

It is enough to drive one mad. I was so knocked up last night that the Minister sent me to bed, although there was an important piece of work to be done. He says he is in a blue funk lest I should get overtired and be unable to help him. This is very flattering for me; but really I can't stand it much longer. I slept from one o'clock this morning till ten at one stretch, which I rarely do. Since then I have not had a moment to myself. There are heaps of papers to be sent off and not sufficient time to get them ready. Any number of people are asking to see me; and the Minister keeps sending for me!

M. Jules Favre comes here every day and gives us a deal of work to do. I have to look after the re-victualling of Paris, the railways, the post, the prisoners of war, the safe-conducts, and a whole heap of other things.

The news from the provinces is good. Bourbaki has really committed suicide and eighty thousand Frenchmen have crossed the Swiss frontier. . . .

VERSAILLES, *February* 2, 1871

You reproach me for not speaking of the Convention, but it was impossible to do so before it was con-

cluded, and then you ought to have known of it much sooner by the telegrams. I need not tell you that I am very pleased about it. If people in Berlin are not glad, they are very foolish, because we have obtained thereby all the military advantages and also that of probably having an Assembly that can treat with us about a definitive peace. As for Paris, I don't want to enter it, for people say that it is a sad sight for those who knew it in its splendour. But it is another question whether our troops would be satisfied if they were obliged to leave the country after the peace without an "entry" into this town which has given them so much to do.

Enclosed is a letter from young Curtis, from which it appears that Henry has already found means to slip into Paris and to convey some provisions to your people. I proposed to your mother on the first day that she should come here and that I would take her wherever she liked, but she does not seem to wish to come. She only says she is ready to meet me at the Pont de Sèvres if I will fix the day and time of meeting. I begged her to do as she pleased and to fix the time and place according to her convenience. Perhaps I shall see her one of these days.

We are still overburdened with work and bickerings here; and besides that, Frenchmen keep coming to see me to ask me some question. It quite maddens me. Redern came here yesterday for a week's holiday. He wanted particularly to put up in my rooms. This was impossible, and I got rid of him.

What do you say to Bourbaki's death, and to the flight of the whole of his army, eighty thousand strong, into Switzerland? It is the *coup de grâce* for M. Gambetta. It is to be hoped that he will now comprehend that all is over and that there is nothing more to do but to give in. Everybody wants peace in France, and he will, I think, have some difficulty in continuing

the war. But one cannot tell, and I am not quite sure whether it would not be more advantageous for us to go on. . . .

VERSAILLES, *February* 3, 1871

I have just received your letter of January 31st telling me the great piece of news that you are up and have moved to your boudoir. After being absent for six months, I should like to be there with you too, but unfortunately it is not yet possible to foretell the date of our return. I don't think the King is contemplating a surprise for his good city of Berlin by paying a visit incognito, so that I have no chance of accompanying him. Besides, we are so terribly overwhelmed with work that I could not even ask for permission to go away for a few days. Our work has increased in a terrible manner since the signature of the Convention, and it does not seem likely to get less yet awhile.

Yesterday for the first time since the negotiations began I was able to go out for an hour, but I had to ask the Minister if he had any objection to my doing so. I had the Chestnut saddled and rode to St. Cloud. A sadder or more curious sight it is impossible to imagine! The Château is in ruins, the whole town burnt down, the walls of the houses barely hold together and are tumbling to pieces every day. It is most distressing to see! I could not stop there longer than five minutes, for it was four o'clock and I had to be back by five. I returned at a good brisk trot from St. Cloud to Versailles—a very fair distance. It did me good to get some fresh air. Whom do you think I met *en route?* Poor Campbell, who was walking to Versailles to see me and to ask me if I could protect his property at Montretout. I will do what I can. He knew you had had a baby, and inquired very kindly after you.

There is no news from Paris, so I shall not write any more either. If they don't want to see me, I can do without them too. What do you say to Henry's impertinence in entering Paris without our permission and without the permission of the French? He took some provisions to the Rue de Courcelles. With their cow that they have permission to kill they can get along until the arrival of fresh provisions, which are coming from all sides.

I think it is doubtful whether M. Gambetta wants to accept the Convention. If he kicks, the war will begin again at once on our side, and I am not sure that this will not be the best way of arriving at a definite peace. Perhaps you won't quite understand what I mean, but I assure you it is not quite silly. However, we shall see!

VERSAILLES, *February* 4, 1871

Time is passing, but unfortunately each day resembles the other. I have the pleasure of being on a Committee that has to examine all the claims resulting from the capitulation, etc. I was to have been on our Committee for the contribution of 200 millions that have to be paid by the city of Paris, but I managed to get out of it.

We are expecting M. Jules Favre again to-day, and he may arrive at any moment. The Minister has just gone away and has ordered me to receive him, to talk to him, to tell him a number of things, and to find out what he wants, etc. etc. This means another day lost for me, that is to say, I shall not be able to go out although the weather is fine. It is very annoying.

Herbert Bismarck arrived here last night. He looks exceedingly well, and is glad that he can rejoin his regiment. He told me he had seen a good deal of you, and that you were looking well. Redern is also with me and sends you his compliments.

I think my Frenchmen have just arrived, so good-bye.—I can't write any more to-day. . . .

VERSAILLES, *February* 5, 1871

Enclosed is a letter from your mother which has just been given me by Doctor Curtis. She went to Petit Val and dined with the officers, returning to Paris with a lot of provisions. In her letter she asked me to get her safe-conducts for a number of people, but does not seem disposed to come here, or to give me a rendezvous between Paris and Versailles. She can do as she likes: I won't suggest it again.

My life here continues the same. Directly I got up people began to call on me to-day, and since then I have not had a quiet moment. The whole correspondence with Paris and all the arrangements with the French Government pass through my hands. I should not mind if I were to get something out of it; but it brings me nothing but annoyance.

If I wished to do so, I could make a fortune in a few days. A good many of the transactions between the French Government and the big contractors for the re-victualling of the city have to obtain my consent. There was a man with me three times this morning who has to supply 35,000 sheep, and he will pocket from the transaction a clear profit of 200,000 francs. If I had chosen, I could have told him that he would have to share it with me, otherwise the contract would not be passed; but unfortunately my principles forbid me to go in for things of this kind.

As a sort of recreation I am to receive the visit of M. Jules Favre in half an hour! I have to receive him because the Minister is not here. The charm of these visits is beginning to pass away! . . .

I have nothing new to tell you. We must wait till something definite takes place in the south. . . .

VERSAILLES, *February* 6, 1871

If things go on like this, I shall go mad. Since eleven o'clock I have not had time to sit down and it is now three! I have been once to the King and three times to the General Staff, not to mention all the other people with whom I have had to talk. Besides this, I have a table full of business letters that have to be sent off. I shall certainly ask my friend M. Jules Favre to give me a place at Charenton so that I can rest a bit. . . .

VERSAILLES, *February* 8, 1871

What did you say at not receiving a letter yesterday? I am really quite upset about it, but it wasn't my fault. I had to run about all the morning—to the General Staff, to the War Minister, etc. I got home at 2 p.m., and found the Minister on horseback! He asked me to accompany him and I could not refuse. Instead of being away for an hour only, we did not get back till five o'clock and the post had already left some time before.

Henry has just arrived from Paris and has brought me the enclosed letter from your mother. I opened it by mistake, but have not read it. He tells me that all his people are well at Paris. They have still got their two cows and have had no lack of bread as they have got flour at home. Henry will return to Paris and your mother is to meet him at the Pont de Neuilly. I shall go with him in order to see your mother for a moment. I hope at least to be able to do so. We have still got M. Favre here, and a number of other people, all of whom want something, so that I don't know whether I shall be able to get off in time.

I thought of you yesterday and of baby No. 2, who was baptised in my absence. I am very sorry I could

not be there; but it was not possible to manage otherwise.

I hope that as M. Gambetta has been sent about his business, peace will issue from all this mess and that we shall soon be able to return home. God grant that it will be soon. I have had enough of it, a good deal too much in fact, and I am quite exhausted. . . .

VERSAILLES, *February* 9, 1871

I received your letter of the 6th this morning. . . . I can now tell you a piece of news—I have seen your mother and we had a conversation of more than half an hour. Henry and I started at 3 p.m. yesterday, he on the small Bay, I on the Chestnut, and we went through St. Cloud. It was pouring with rain, and I got wet through, and was up to my ears in dirt. We rode at a quick pace and reached the bridge at 4 p.m., although the distance was very long. You can form no idea of the bustle on the bridge and on the two banks of the river, one of which we are holding whilst the other is occupied by the French. There are long rows of carriages, one lot entering Paris—all of them with provisions—the other leaving the city. On one side there is an officer with a detachment whose duty it is to examine the baskets; and on the other a French officer with municipal guards.

I crossed the bridge on foot with Henry and asked the French officer to allow your mother's carriage to pass. Although there were fifty or sixty carriages encumbering the approaches, waiting their turn, he immediately let the *coupé* pass. It was drawn by a grey that had been saved from the general requisition, they giving an old jade in exchange that Henry had found at Petit Val belonging to nobody. I got into the carriage and we had a tolerably long chat.

Your mother is looking exceedingly well, and only

complains that she has been eating too much since the signature of the armistice. I don't think many people could be found in Paris in this frame of mind! She won't come here, because she has got it into her head that she is being watched by the police in consequence of her relations with me. We have arranged to meet again on Tuesday at the Pont de Neuilly. She wants to go to Dinard at the end of the month and is very anxious that you should join her there. . . . We spoke about politics for a moment or two. When I mentioned the name of the Emperor (Napoleon) you should have seen her pout! She reproaches him for having allowed himself to be taken at Sedan and for having smoked cigarettes in the midst of this disaster! As Khevenhüller would say, it was enough to make one die of laughter! After talking for some time, Henry and I took your mother back to the French side and I mounted the Chestnut again. It was late and I was wet through; and I had to find an officer to give me the parole. I got back at 6.30, changed all my clothes, for I was wet to the skin, and dined alone.

VERSAILLES, *February* 10, 1871

I had to get up at seven o'clock this morning. You know how I like that! About ten o'clock the French *commission d'exécution* arrived and we had a meeting that lasted till one o'clock. I got away then for lunch: of course everything was cold, as the others had lunched at twelve.

M. Favre with a number of other people arrived half an hour ago, and I have had to keep them company till now. The Minister is conferring with him now in the neighbouring *salon,* and he may call me any moment. I hope they will let me get to my second page! . . . The elections seem to be going on

regularly all over France and one can infer that there will be some sort of an Assembly. We shall see how it will be composed, and whether it will support the present Government, and whether we can treat for peace with it. I am beginning to think we shall be able to do so, because the great majority of the inhabitants don't want war any longer, and are longing for some kind of peace, except perhaps those departments that have not suffered from the war. If it should be so, we shall have peace in a few weeks.

I wish we could look forward to having a little less work. As it is, it increases in bulk every day! When I get home at night I have not got through half that should have been done! I am obliged to hand over a good portion of it to Holstein, who is only too glad to work! What a curious taste! . . .

VERSAILLES, *February* 11, 1871

I am half mad because of the enormous amount of work. There is no time to finish everything. I get up earlier than usual and go to bed late, and yet I have never quite finished what has to be done. I don't know what would become of me if I hadn't got Holstein to help me. Our good friend Wartensleben[1] has written to tell me that he would very much like to come here to work, so the Minister has permitted me to request his regiment to send him. He will be delighted, and I shall be very glad to have him. He is a good fellow and will be very useful to me. . . . I am in great need of moral and physical rest. I only dream of one thing and that is to be able to lie down on my back in the grass and to do nothing at all!

I regret that I could not be present at baby's baptism. We will call her Marie if you like. Your

[1] Lieutenant *à la suite* of the Army: and Attaché to the Prussian Legation at the Hague.

mother seemed to hope you would call her Mélanie after your sister, but I must confess that I don't like this name much—it sounds rather pretentious. Ratibor dined with us last night and spoke a good deal about you. He is very nice: I like him very much.

Since writing the above lines I have been twice to the Minister; I have received M. Picard and General Voldau, who asked me a lot of things; I have corrected a note written in French; have had a talk about an article that is to be published in the newspapers; seen Prince Pless and asked the Minister to give him an audience; etc. etc. So you can quite understand, little Darling, that my ideas are all in a state of confusion, and that it is very difficult for me to write a letter containing common sense. You must be a little patient; I try to force myself to be so too. The remembrance of all this confusion will be very curious, so that I no longer regret having taken so active a part in it. . . .

VERSAILLES, *February* 12, 1871

Here I am at three o'clock tired and exhausted—it is the same thing every day since this miserable armistice. Since ten o'clock this morning I haven't had a moment's rest. A meeting of the *Commission* which lasted till one; then an interview with the Minister; then telegrams to send off; and afterwards a whole procession of people who wanted to speak to me and to ask "a little favour" of me! To wind up the list, a dozen railway engineers came with claims and would not leave me. I looked at the clock and saw it was five minutes to three and had to end by almost turning them out of the room. . . .

It is more than probable that we shall not leave here without entering Paris. . . .



GRAF PAUL HATZFELDT AT VERSAILLES WITH HIS PONIES THAT WERE IN PARIS THROUGHOUT THE SIEGE

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VERSAILLES, *February* 13, 1871

I received your letter of the 10th this morning. . . . If the weather is not too bad to-morrow (Tuesday) I shall drive with the ponies to the Pont de Sèvres to see your mother and perhaps Mademoiselle also, who wrote me a line yesterday. . . .

Don't suppose that I have less to do because I am writing in a quieter tone to-day. I have been working pretty hard this morning and have managed to get a moment's rest because Cardinal Bonnechose is with the Minister. . . . Instead of riding yesterday I took a walk in the Avenue St. Cloud with Bismarck-Bohlen. We bought new bridles for our horses so as to look well when we enter Paris. You mustn't conclude that this matter is not settled; everybody thinks it will take place. I think it must, because the army would be very angry if the troops were refused this satisfaction, and also because the Parisians would always say that they had not been defeated if we did not enter Paris. Anyhow, you need not be alarmed. Every sort of precaution will be taken, and Henry tells me that the population expect it and that people are already fixing the day for it.

VERSAILLES, *February* 14, 1871

Again I have only a moment for writing. From nine o'clock this morning I had to work with the Commission: then five minutes for breakfast: and then some important work with some officers. It is now 2.15. . . .

From Rochefort's newspaper that you have sent me it would seem that they will burn Paris rather than let the "barbarians" enter the "sacred" city! M. Rochefort's threats don't make the slightest impression on us, and will not prevent what they dread. It is quite im-

possible for us to go away from here without entering Paris, and it is only a question of time. Perhaps we shall only march in just before we leave; but we can't give up the entry into the city entirely.

Just now we have to consider how the Assembly at Bordeaux will conduct itself and whether it will offer some serious chance of concluding peace. The prolongation of the armistice will depend on this and probably the date also of our entry into Paris.

It appears that the large majority of deputies belong to the Conservative party; and it is said that the Orleanists are gaining ground. Anyhow there will be complete anarchy in this unhappy country the moment we leave it. . . .

VERSAILLES, *February* 15, 1871

I received your letter of the 12th this morning. . . . After finishing my letter yesterday I drove as fast as possible to the Pont de Sèvres; it was a very long distance for the poor ponies. I arrived there a few minutes after three o'clock and found your mother waiting there with Mademoiselle. Both of them came over with me to our side and we all sat for a while in my carriage. Your mother was looking very well and was in a very good humour. Mademoiselle made me split with laughter. She had got on her medal as a member of the American Ladies' Ambulance, chatted with everybody and stared at all the officers in such a way that your mother said it was quite dangerous. Your father has sent me an old-fashioned stuff for covering furniture, and I hope I shall be able to forward it to you to-morrow. I have got something for you, but don't know when I shall be able to send it. Henry left yesterday, or is leaving to-day for St. Valery for a few days. During his absence Petit Val will be put under the charge of a Bavarian

officer. I trust he will look after the place properly, but can't swear that he will. . . . The Minister has just sent word to me to tell me to go to Cardinal Bonnechose and I am sure I shall be kept there for some time, so good-bye—I am sorry I can't write a longer letter. . . .

VERSAILLES, *February* 16, 1871

I received your letter of the 13th this morning. . . . I hoped to have gone to Mont Valérien to-day, but had to give it up as I was too busy. Bismarck-Bohlen was tired of waiting, so went without me. . . .

I like Cardinal de Bonnechose very much. He is very amiable and has a distinguished way with him. Of course he kept me for over half an hour. . . .

I have just been told that Thiers has been nominated Head of the Government. If this is true I think the negotiations will begin soon. . . .

VERSAILLES, *February* 17, 1871

Your letter of the 14th gave me great pleasure. . . . When I return I shall bring my two horses and the two ponies, so please see that the stables are put in order for them.

I sent your letter to Holstein and have just asked him what you had to tell him. He says you told him to keep an eye on me. This is very comical, considering that there isn't a single woman here. But of course there are exceptions; and I have just been talking at considerable length with one of the prettiest women from Paris, whom you know also. I can't mention her name because we were talking about a question concerning politics and it must not be known that she was here. Try to guess who it was! You and I spent a day with her once at Ferrières. At that time she was dressed

in black and was exceedingly pretty. She has changed a little since then ; and now I recollect that it was six years ago. I wonder if you will be able to guess who it was ! The Metternichs were with us the same day, unless I make a mistake. I am not surprised that the Princess talks against us at Vienna and calls us highway robbers ! . . .

There is nothing new to tell you from here. I have got plenty to do. I think it is quite certain that something definite will be decided by the 24th—that is to say, in a week. By then the people of Bordeaux must have made up their minds as to whether they want peace or not. If they make any difficulties, which I think is impossible, we shall find another solution. Anyhow, we can now look upon the war as over. I hope I shall be with you before the 5th or 9th of March.

VERSAILLES, *February* 18, 1871

I received your letter of the 15th this morning, and at the same time four boxes of cigarettes that I was much in need of. The last two days I was reduced to smoking cigars and I cannot stand them long. I was surprised to read that you noticed the aroma of cigarettes in my last letter, or rather that it only struck you this time, because you know that I always smoke the whole time when writing, so that all my letters ought to have a little scent of tobacco about them. . . .

I am sorry that Prince Mensdorff[1] is dead, although I knew him very slightly. . . .

I am delighted that Hugo and Otto visit you sometimes of an evening to keep you company. I hope soon to be one of the party. I think we must have peace in a very short time, despite the violent language of the Paris newspapers and the events that are still taking place in the south. It would be madness for the

[1] Brother-in-law of Prince Hatzfeldt-Wildenburg

French to begin the war over again under present conditions, and we should very soon be at Bordeaux.

I think we shall have peace very soon indeed, and I hope to be with you before the opening of the Reichstag.

Tell Otto he might have got me a little cash, because now is the time for buying stocks, as they are sure to rise a good deal as soon as peace is concluded. . . .

I have got a few pearls for you. I am sure you will like them, but I don't like to run the risk of sending them by the courier unless you wish it. They might get lost and I should not be able to replace them. . . .

VERSAILLES, *February* 19, 1871

Your letter of the 16th arrived this morning. I see that you are very much occupied with baby No. 2. This gives me great pleasure, as I know you don't neglect the other little ones. I envy you and hope soon to be able to devote some time to them if you will allow it. Nelly is getting quite big and we shall play together this summer in our cottage garden. It will be very amusing. Whilst looking forward to this innocent amusement, I have no time here to think of pleasure, and our good friend Holstein won't have much to tell you about me. As I don't give him any opportunity for telling any tales about me, I have advised him to send you the Paris *Figaro* every day by the courier, so that he can earn your approval. He has promised to do so. But the Paris newspapers do not contain very much. There are plenty of calumnies and lots of blustering boast, but not an atom of common sense or good judgment in them—just as it used to be. They are an incorrigible people, and this is due to their inveterate vanity. A Frenchman said to me this morning:—"I love my country, and hope in its own interest that you will march into Paris. It is the only

way to crush our vanity, which is the cause of all our misfortunes."

But you need not be anxious, my Darling, because of our entry into Paris. Nothing will happen—you may rest quite easy about that. Every precaution has been taken, you may be sure of that, and those who shout loudly now will be as quiet as mice and will retire into their houses when they are called upon to show themselves. You are a bit mistaken about the moral valour of your beloved Parisians and of the valour of the French in general. They are much easier to rule than any people in the world, and they blindly obey a man if he knows how to make himself feared and to command respect in any way whatever. This explains the efforts made at Paris and in the provinces since September 4th. They obey M. Gambetta against their will because he is not a man to trifle with, and any man who knows how to command their respect will get the same out of them. It is very curious that our experience in the provinces is precisely the same where there is a mixed population of Germans and French—in Lorraine, for example. The Germans are still resisting and it is difficult to reduce them to submission, whilst the French obey with ease, making no resistance since they understand that they have found an energetic and resolute master.

I hope everything will finish well. I think M. Thiers will arrive the day after to-morrow and then we shall very soon know what we have to expect as to the preliminaries of peace, provided there is not much to discuss about the conditions.

It is said that the King is determined to return to Berlin for the opening of the Reichstag, and I don't think that we shall remain alone here. Of course it would be another thing if we could not come to terms and if the war were to begin again. But I don't think this is possible unless the French have gone quite

mad. If it were so, you might expect to get a letter from Bordeaux, but I hope that things will not develop in this way. . . .

VERSAILLES, *February* 20, 1871

I got up early this morning, a thing I haven't done for a long time, in order to go to the General Staff, and on my return at 9.30 I found your letter of the 17th. . . . I have received a letter from Mme. Lassonier; do you remember her? She asks me to procure a pass for somebody. . . .

I hope I shall be able to get a holiday immediately after my return. If the preliminaries of peace are concluded here, we shall have to draft all the questions connected with it. The Minister thinks that this will take six weeks or two months. It is very possible that they won't want me for this; and if so, I could manage to get a short holiday.

We are still without any positive news from Bordeaux; about the arrival of Jules Favre here; and about the time when the negotiations will commence. As usual they are losing their time in Bordeaux in palavering. But it can't last long now, for the armistice expires on the 24th, and we have here no inclination to renew it if peace is not secured.

In the south they are arming for war to the death, so that we should be very foolish to give them any further time. They will have to come to a quick decision if they desire peace.

I am looking forward to seeing my friend M. Thiers in his new character. Who would have thought a year ago, that he would again play a political part of importance like this at his age? We live in curious times!

I have received two numbers of the *Revue des deux Mondes* (1st and 15th February) and will send them to you in a few days.

Holstein has not yet ordered the *Figaro* for you! He prefers writing long letters and sending you a full report. . . .

VERSAILLES, *February* 21, 1871

. . . It is 1.30 and M. Thiers has just arrived. He looks in good health, and is as round and plump as usual. We shook hands. I asked after Mme. Thiers, who is not quite well, and then Bismarck entered the room. They are still talking over things. Let us hope that all is going well. It would be monstrous madness on their part to continue the war; and even if they were to, it would be soon finished. Whatever happens, it can only be a question of a few weeks. . . .

Cardinal de Bonnechose only came here in connection with the contributions imposed on the town of Rouen. He was let off two-thirds. I saw the Bishop of Le Mans to-day. He came on a similar mission; and then there were a number of other deputations, all on the same kind of business. I am very sorry that these contributions should be levied at the last moment. The only use in doing so is that the people will be inclined towards peace. . . .

Wartensleben has arrived at last—very delighted to be able to come to us. He is a nice fellow, and I am delighted to have been able to render him a small service.

I have at last got a little basket carriage (where it came from I can't say). I have just been doing my commissions, driving the ponies myself. It was great fun. . . .

VERSAILLES, *February* 22, 1871

I have received your letter of the 20th. I think you have made a mistake in the date. Herbert was dream-

ing when he said that the Minister had offered me a holiday after your confinement. It was Keudell, who very kindly asked me if he should speak to the Minister about it, but he advised me not to ask for one if it was not necessary. But I should have done so, if you had not written to tell me not to come. Later, it would not have been wise to mention it to the Minister, for he would have thought it rather a strange request to make just then. Besides, I could only have come in any case for three or four days. You say you have been fussing yourself for nothing. You must not believe everything people tell you. And in matters concerning me, you ought to be forewarned against things of this kind, as you know I should not act without good reasons for doing so.

Unfortunately I can't write you a long letter to-day. M. Thiers is in the adjoining *salon* negotiating with the Minister. I too have a good deal to do. So you must not be angry with me if my letter is short to-day.

The "holy family" have again given me a lot of unnecessary worry. Your mother sent me a telegram the other day saying that all was in confusion at Petit Val. I immediately wrote to Tresckow, who telegraphed to the General in command in that neighbourhood; and, in fact, a big inquiry was made. It turned out that everything was in very good order. It is very absurd of these people! Shall I send you your pearls, or shall I bring them with me?

There is nothing new to tell you from here. Negotiations are going on, and nobody knows yet what will be the result. Did I tell you I went to see the Fort d'Issy? It is very curious to see the effect of our artillery. The barracks are in ruins and look like old lace full of holes, the walls are so perforated by the cannon-balls. . . .

VERSAILLES, *February* 23, 1871

I have just finished a despatch dealing with the exchange of prisoners of war, which gave me a great deal of trouble, and so I am tired. At two o'clock Colonel Loehner, member of the French Commission, should be here. . . .

Everything is quiet in Paris; but there is a good deal of sickness, so that I don't want you to come here. One of the reasons of this state of affairs was the scarcity of fresh vegetables. In twenty-four hours I obtained permission for them to have four markets in the neighbourhood of the city, which is quite contrary to the Convention. If I chose to act as the French do, it would be very easy for me to earn some money; but, thank God, I am a trifle too "respectable" to do that. It is no merit on my part, because everybody with us looks upon such things in the same light, and therein lies our strength. We are not so corrupt as they are here. At the same time I must say that I should like to earn some money in some honest manner, and I am racking my brains to think of some way to do so. All one has to do is to get a good idea or to discover some good investment. One ought to be able to do that now. . . .

VERSAILLES, *February* 24, 1871
(2 *p.m.*)

There is no end to one's worries. The village of Sucy had to pay a contribution, and as Perault was foolish enough to get appointed temporary Maire and nothing was paid, our good Bavarians put him in prison, which they had no right to do. I heard of it last night by letter from your mother and immediately obtained a telegraphic order from the Governor-General that he should be set at liberty. He also reduced the

amount of contribution to a third of what was originally demanded. Your father sent me word in haughty terms that as an American he hadn't to pay a sou. I replied to your mother that there was no necessity for him to pay, not because he was an American, as this would not protect him anywhere against taxes, but because I was there. I wanted to let them know that after all they owe it to me that they have got off so cheaply during this war, because I know that very soon they will assert just the contrary. I added that I was much interested in the poor inhabitants of Sucy, for whom I should do all I could. . . .

The negotiations are continuing here and we must hope that something will soon come of them. M. Thiers and M. Favre arrived a little while ago. It will be necessary to come to a decision soon as the armistice expires at midnight on the 26th, and I doubt whether it would be prolonged unless some real guarantees were given that peace would be concluded.

I have no doubt at all myself about the result, for M. Thiers is much too clear-headed to continue a hopeless struggle. . . .

VERSAILLES, *February* 25, 1871

I have only time to say good morning. My executive commission detained me up to now with all sorts of trifles. . . . This morning I had my photograph taken with all my animals. I was mounted on the Chestnut, my second soldier was on the little Bay and Littman was in the basket carriage with the ponies. I hope the photo will be a success and that you will like it. All the others have had their photos taken with their horses, and we shall exchange pictures. It will be a nice souvenir.

There is nothing new here; but I think we shall know something to-night or to-morrow morning and

that it will be of a satisfactory nature. Thiers and Jules Favre have been here since the morning with M. d'Armaillé, whom you probably know.

Last night I saw Mouchy and M. de Gobineau, who were here in connection with their contributions. It has all been satisfactorily arranged. They have Schwartzkoppen as Préfet and he has been playing the fool.

VERSAILLES, *February* 26, 1871
(2 *p.m.*)

I am tired out and don't know whether I can write much to you to-day.

M. Thiers and M. Jules Favre are upstairs with the Minister and we expect every minute to hear the decision, which is no longer a question of doubt. We had a terrible day yesterday. I could not go away for a minute from noon to one o'clock in the morning. I hoped to be able to go to bed then, but it was found necessary to draw up the whole treaty again in French. I went to bed afterwards as the German draft was not quite finished. At three o'clock Holstein woke me up and corrected and partly rewrote his translation. This occupied us till six o'clock in the morning, when he left. I had just gone off to sleep, when I was again awakened at 7.30 and again at nine o'clock. The Minister sent for me at ten, when I had to alter several phrases, and now I am again waiting for the Minister. . . . I hope the document will be signed to-day. . . .

I am sending you a book of caricatures about the appearance of Paris during the siege. I shall try to collect a few more good ones to send you. It will be worth while keeping them.

It is very flattering for me that these good people at Berlin are sending me to Paris; but, as far as I know,

there is no thought of it, and I don't know who will be appointed. But it is quite indifferent to me; to stop in Paris will not be particularly pleasant for us Germans for some time.

VERSAILLES, *February* 27, 1871

By this time you know that the preliminaries of peace have been signed—yesterday afternoon. It was just after 4.30 when the signature took place. When I wrote yesterday I knew that they had come to an agreement, because we were getting the two copies drawn up as quickly as possible to be signed.

I wanted to have the pen that was used on this occasion, but the Minister used the gold pen ornamented with diamonds that had been given to him as a present some months ago for the purpose of signing the treaty of peace with it.

I need not tell you, my Darling, how satisfied I am from every point of view and how relieved I am, morally and physically. We were all utterly done up —I particularly so.

M. Thiers and M. Favre left with d'Armaillé immediately after the signature of the Agreement and you can easily imagine that they did not look very pleased. M. Thiers, generally so polite, left without saying good-bye to me. He seemed preoccupied, and, indeed, he had good reason to be so, for many people amongst this nation of fools will hardly pardon him for placing his signature at the foot of this treaty.

I went to my room to wash my hands for dinner and on returning here I met Bismarck, who had just come in from the garden, where he had been to take a whiff of fresh air. I congratulated him on this great success and on having brought this immense labour to an end. He shook my hand and thanked me for all the hard work I had done.

Graf Bray, the Minister of Bavaria, dined with us. We remained over two hours at table and drank to the health of the "New-Born," and we all expressed a hope that it would have a longer life than its predecessor had (the last peace with France).

The Minister was very tired, and is still suffering from his rheumatism; but he was in a real good humour and remained chatting with us round the fire till ten o'clock. A whole heap of visitors came to congratulate—Moltke, Roon,[1] Tresckow, Lehndorff, Radziwill and others. The King, it is said, was very much affected and happy when he received the news. He kissed Moltke and Roon, thanking them profusely, and he sent word to Bismarck that he thanked him from the bottom of his heart.

At last it is all over! It was said this morning that there were some disturbances at Paris—that the doors of houses had been burst open, etc.; but I don't attach much importance to these rumours.

You know that I do not personally attach much importance to our entry into Paris, but it could not be avoided. When this point was accepted, the rest was arranged as well as we could. We shall only occupy a very small portion of the city, and the occupation is sure not to last long if the Assembly loses no time in ratifying the treaty; I entertain no doubts as to the ratification. The Conservatives have a large majority, and are sure not to allow themselves to be led away

[1] Albrecht Graf von Roon, born 1803; entered Prussian army 1821; wrote a number of books on geography and tactics; in 1844 instructed Prince Friedrich Karl in geography and tactics, and accompanied him to Bonn in 1846, and afterwards on his journeys; in 1859 made Lieut.-General, and appointed in the same year War Minister, and in 1861 Minister of the Navy also. It was Roon who, despite the opposition of the Diet, carried the new Prussian Army Organisation Scheme to suit the new order of things. In 1866 and 1870–1 he displayed brilliant talent for organisation, especially when war broke out with France; he accompanied the King to the seat of war; was made a Graf in 1871 and Field-Marshal General in 1873. He died 1879.

by the shouts of a few red deputies. So that we can anticipate with certainty that all is at an end unless something, which would now be considered quite out of the question, should happen. I should like to be able to tell you now when we shall be back, but it is still difficult to say exactly when that will be. I think it will be in any case on the 14th or 15th. It is said that the King intends to make a few excursions before returning. I should like to do the same, if we do not leave before the King. I should above all like to see Tours, Le Mans, Orléans, and Rouen, or at least the last-named town, which is said to be a very fine city. Everybody has been making excursions lately except ourselves. We haven't had time to do so. I should like to see something before leaving this beautiful France, which I shall perhaps not see for some time to come.

Did you receive a bouquet yesterday, my Love? Whom do you think it came from? I must explain. I had asked for some violets, knowing that you like them; and instead of that, they brought me a bouquet! I suppose it arrived in a very dilapidated condition!

Good-bye, Darling: you have no idea how delighted I am that it is all over, and that I shall be able soon to hold you in my arms. I am now going to ride to St. Germain (where I have not yet been!) to order a good dinner for to-morrow. . . .

VERSAILLES, *February* 28, 1871

It is not yet noon and I have never written to you at this hour. This time it has nothing to do with business, but with pleasure. It is curious, is it not? Bismarck-Bohlen, Wartensleben and I rode to St. Germain yesterday, and we ordered for to-day the best dinner possible for sixteen people. We said that they were to give us a dinner regardless of expense. Just

fancy what it will cost. Mademoiselle would have a fit if she knew of it!

We have invited the Ministers of South Germany, so we must have something really good.

I was very glad to be able to go to St. Germain. We rode through Bougival and Pont Marly, and returned *viâ* Marly le Roi and past the Marly rifle ranges. The two roads are lovely. I shall ride over there to-day and shall drive back with the ponies at five. I am sending them on this afternoon at two o'clock. I hope we shall have a good dinner: I am looking forward to the excursion.

There was no truth in the rumour about disturbances at Paris. On the contrary: that part of the town that we are to occupy has already been evacuated, and there is every reason for supposing that all will go off quite quietly.

Of course people are furious at Paris because our troops are going to enter the city. On the other hand, our troops are very disinterested because the occupation is to last so short a time, and because so small a portion of the city is to be occupied. This shows that one can't satisfy everybody. Anyhow, Bismarck managed the thing very cleverly in the interest of peace, and that is the main point, for the Assembly will hurry on the ratification of the treaty in order to shorten the period of occupation.

I have just had a Paris newspaper shown to me called *Paris Belleville*. It is very funny. There is a long letter in it from the King to the Emperor Napoleon, in which the latter reproaches him *for not having kept his promise about Paris and the rest after he had handed over Sedan and the army*. It is idiotic, and is so badly written that one can see the object of it in a moment. But of course a lot of stupid people will be taken in by it.

This reminds me of what the Minister said one day:—

"For a long time the French were supposed to be clever. It is a mistake—they are a stupid people!" I must confess that all that we have seen for the last six months confirms these words, which I did not believe at the time.

The troops will enter Paris to-morrow, and it is said that we shall go there on Friday. I don't know whether this is correct. . . .

VERSAILLES, *March* 1, 1871

After our capital dinner yesterday, which I enjoyed immensely, I thought I would secure a souvenir of the great event by getting all the high personages who took part in it to sign the menu in order that I might send it to you.

With these lines I enclose the historic document and beg you to take great care of it. Our good friend Wächter spoilt it a bit by writing some silly remarks above his signature, but that doesn't much matter.

The essential point is that we had a very good dinner and that you will be pleased with the menu. It only cost the modest sum of seven hundred francs! We carried out our part as *grands seigneurs* and gave each waiter a tip of four francs; so large a sum had never been given before. The weather was lovely and it was very pleasant on the terrace. Bismarck-Bohlen and I drove back with the ponies, who thought nothing of the distance. It was a delightful expedition and I shall always look back upon it with great pleasure.

But I am as surly as a bear to-day. The King is holding a big review at Longchamps to-day, to which I did not go, as I hate reviews. I had intended taking a quiet ride on the little Bay, as the Chestnut is a bit tired, and to my horror I discovered that Abeken, the "General of the Baschi-Bosuks,"[1] who pokes his nose everywhere, had taken him to Longchamps without

[1] A nickname given to Herr Abeken.

saying a word to me about it. He fancies that in his quality of General he should always be followed by a mounted orderly! It is a most ridiculous sight! The upshot is that I am obliged to go about on foot to-day in this lovely weather, as I cannot drive out with the ponies as they must rest after yesterday's journey.

The troops entered Paris this morning and I think everything will have passed off quietly. Bismarck-Bohlen went there and a number of my acquaintances, and I wanted very much to go too. To please you, I didn't go. The King has decided nothing yet about his entry. He must do so before long, as we shall soon have the Assembly's ratification, and then it will be too late. I think I shall go to see the Champs Elysées to-morrow. . . .

VERSAILLES, *March* 3, 1871
(11 *a.m.*)

I went to bed at one o'clock and got up at nine. . . . At five this afternoon Colonel Loehner, member of the Commission, is to come to see me, so I must be ready to receive him. I have quite decided to go to Paris to-day, even if there is no official entry, because I must see it and all will be over soon.

Yesterday's entry of the troops passed off perfectly quietly. The populace of Paris, the vilest in the whole world, did not belie themselves. They whistled and hooted, but scattered in all directions and ran away like a pack of cowards at the approach of a soldier.

General von Kameke,[1] accompanied only by three or

[1] Arnold Karl Georg von Kameke, born 1817; entered the Engineers 1836; in 1866 was Chief of the Staff of the 2nd Army Corps; in 1868 became Lieut.-General; in 1870–1 he directed the battle of Spichern, and distinguished himself at Colombey and Gravelotte. After the fall of Metz he took possession of Diedenhofen, Montmédy, and Mezières. On December 23rd, 1870, was summoned to Versailles to take over the direction of the Engineer attack on Paris. On November 9th, 1873, appointed Roon's successor as War Minister. Retired in 1883, and died 12th October, 1893.

HÔTEL DU PAVILLON HENRI IV

ICI NAQUIT LOUIS XIV

MENU

HORS D'ŒUVRE SUR TABLE

Les Huîtres

POTAGES

Les Hessuis Le Royal

RELEVÉS

Les Bouchées à la Manglas
Le Saumon à la Daumont

ENTRÉES

Les Filets à la Béarnaise
Les Poulets sautés aux Truffes
La Grenade de homard à la Regny
Sorbets au Rhum

RÔTS

Les Faisans et les Perdreaux
flanqués de Mauviettes
Salade

ENTREMETS

Les Asperges en Branches
Sauce Hollandaise
Les Pommes à la Condé
La Bombe Glacée

DESSERT

Fromage Fours et Fruits

We testify to the beneficent effects of to-day's dinner, which was arranged by Graf Hatzfeldt and Graf Bismarck-Bohlen.

St. Germain-en-Laye,
Pavillon Henri IV., February 28th, 1871.

Bucher	*Waechter*[4]
Graf Wartensleben	*v. Bismarck*
Holstein	*Bray-Steinburg*[5]
Wagener	*Jolly*[6]
Abeken	*Mittnacht*[7]
Rudhart[1]	*Keudell*
v. Soden[2]	*Graf Bismarck-Bohlen*
Hardeck[3]	

[1] Herr Legations-Rath Rudhart, Secretary to the Bavarian Minister.

[2] Baron von Soden (Wirklicher Geheimer Legations-Rath), Secretary to the Württemberg Minister.

[3] Herr Legations-Rath Hardeck, Secretary to the Baden Minister.

[4] Baron Waechter was Minister for Württemberg at Paris before the outbreak of war in 1870; during the war he was appointed Württemberg Minister for Foreign Affairs.

[5] Graf Bray-Steinburg, Bavarian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

[6] Herr Jolly, Baden Minister for Foreign Affairs.

[7] Herr von Mittnacht, Württemberg Minister of the Interior.

N.B.—Notes concerning the other names are already inserted in other parts of the book.

four officers and three gensdarmes, rode all round the quarter we occupied, and left far behind him the few troops he had with him at first, namely one single battalion of infantry and less than a squadron of cavalry. Nobody ventured to say a word to him.

All the shops were shut, but there were a great many people in the streets and even at the windows. In the evening the shops reopened and all of them are sure to be open to-day. I got all these details from Bismarck-Bohlen, who spent the whole day in Paris.

No news from your mother. I shall not be able to go to the Rue de Courcelles, as it is not occupied by us. I should have to go in plain clothes, and if I were recognised, I should risk some unpleasantness. . . .

We know nothing yet about the departure of the King—neither the date nor the route he will take, nor even if we shall accompany him or not. . . . I need hardly say that I should like to gallop home, stopping nowhere on the way.

The weather is lovely and the blue sky hasn't a cloud in it. It is just the weather for taking a ride to Paris through the unfortunate Bois de Boulogne, which I am told is no longer to be recognised. Every tree has been hewn down right up to the lake. . . .

VERSAILLES, *March* 3, 1871

One line in great haste. I got home very late last night after having ridden four leagues and walked a good deal. I must mount my horse again now to take part in a last review of the troops at Longchamps, so I haven't a moment to lose.

You have no idea how pleased I am that I have been to Paris. It was extremely interesting, and I shall always remember my visit there. I crossed the Seine at Sèvres on a bridge of boats with Wartensleben. We rode past the cascade and then we proceeded

towards the lake. I inquired the way, as I thought I had lost it. But no—I was at the lake without knowing it. Everything is altered. The whole Bois is cut down right up to the fortifications, the lake is almost dried up, and all the roads are all ruined. It is a monstrous shame! There was a huge barricade as we entered the Avenue de l'Impératrice, and the squares on both sides were devastated. There was a crowd of people as soon as we passed l'Avenue de l'Étoile. After going as far as the Jardins des Tuileries we went to Le Doyen's to order dinner. We dined pretty well in a private room with little Hohenlohe, the second little Ratibor and some others. Afterwards there was a grand tattoo along the Champs Elysées. Thousands of people came to take part in it. It was a fine sight and very curious to witness. Interminable shouts of hurrah! The Parisians were perfectly quiet. At nine o'clock we left to return. We passed the Arc de l'Étoile and crossed the Pont de Neuilly and proceeded by Saresnes, St. Cloud, and Ville d'Avray. We reached Versailles at eleven o'clock.

It is said that we shall perhaps go to Compiègne to-morrow or Monday, and shall remain there for some days. I think we shall soon start for Berlin. . . .

VERSAILLES, *March* 4, 1871

What I am going to tell you will, I think, please you. I think we shall leave sooner than I had thought. I should not be surprised if we left on Monday or Tuesday. Nothing is decided, however, and I don't yet know what route we shall take, but I think we shall stop for a day at Strassburg. . . .

I went to the review at Longchamps yesterday only to please Wartensleben; for all reviews bore me to death. It was a very fine sight, but the sun was so hot that I got a horrible sick headache. . . .

It seems that they anticipate disturbances at Paris. I should not be at all surprised to hear of them. I hope the French Government will seize the opportunity for bombarding Belleville and massacring as many as possible of the *canaille* there. I am not of a sanguinary disposition, but it would be rendering a service to humanity in general and to France in particular to get rid of them. . . .

VERSAILLES, *March* 5, 1871

Thank God—I think we are leaving to-morrow. I must not boast, for a change might be made in our plans. There are some very exalted personages here who cannot make up their minds to leave this place of delight now that they have nothing more to do here.

If we really leave to-morrow morning, we shall be at Berlin on Thursday the 9th, unless we stop often *en route*. You will obtain positive news about our journey at the Foreign Office or at Gräfin Bismarck's. If you are well, I hope you will meet me at the station, unless we arrive in the night. But I hope it will be at a sensible hour and that you will order a nice little dinner for us four—you, me and the two little elder kiddies. I am looking forward to this little fête. . . .

No news from your mother; but a letter has reached me from Mademoiselle asking me to see that Sucy is evacuated by the soldiers. She says that now that the weather is fine they can bivouac in the fields so that the inhabitants can return to their houses!

This naïveté is really too superb! As if I would turn our poor soldiers into the streets, even if I could, so that these people could leave Paris, where they went of their own accord! . . . The weather is splendid. . . . I hope to be able to take another ride. Yesterday I took Holstein for a drive round the park with the ponies. To-day I left them (not Holstein) at the

stables so that they could rest, because if we leave to-morrow, they will have a journey of five or six leagues to reach Ligny, where they will be put into the train. . . .

VERSAILLES, *March* 6, 1871

We are just off, and I have only time to write one line. If all goes well and we don't have too many halts, we shall arrive some time on Thursday. I hope I shall see you at the station, if you are well. How lucky to be able to return at last! . . .